

# ial

## Issues in Applied Linguistics

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### SPECIAL ISSUE

PROCEEDINGS FROM THE SECOND UCLA CONFERENCE ON  
LANGUAGE, INTERACTION, AND CULTURE

ADDRESSING HETEROGENEITY:  
LANGUAGE USE IN URBAN CONTEXTS

### ARTICLES

**Some Standard Uses of "What About"-Prefaced  
Interrogatives in the Broadcast News Interview**  
Andrew Roth and David Olsher

**Creating Social Identities Through *Doctrina* Narratives**  
Patricia Baquedano-López

**Heteroglossia and the Construction of Asian-American Identities**  
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### REVIEWS

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Explorations in Discourse Analysis**  
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## Editorial

### Addressing Heterogeneity: Language Use in Urban Environments

Languages, cultures, communities, and infinite ways of living meet in Los Angeles. Home to over 80 languages, this city of 3.5 million emanates its own unique brand of urban intensity. A strategically routed twenty-mile drive across the city can take one through the Armenian community in Glendale, past the Mexican-American community of East Los Angeles, and into downtown's Little Tokyo. Driving west from Downtown leads one through Koreatown, then on to the Russian Jewish Fairfax district, through Beverly Hills and the boutiques of Rodeo Drive, past the Persian stores in Westwood and finally, with luck, to a parking space near the UCLA campus. Though this imaginary drive suggests clear borders between these communities, every day members of different parts of LA interact and the communities themselves are heterogeneous. What maintains the intensity of the LA experience is not so much these communities' separate existence, but the interaction between and within them.

LA's unique intersection of cultures, languages, and multiple ethnic communities has provided a wealth of opportunities for the study of language use in context; and at UCLA, another intersection—that between the fields of Applied Linguistics, Anthropology, Education, and Sociology—makes its intellectual home in the Center for Language, Interaction, and Culture (CLIC). Much of the research being done by graduate students and faculty at the Center examines language use in Los Angeles communities, and given this interest, the organizers of the second UCLA Conference on Language, Interaction, and Culture chose to focus on heterogeneity in urban environments. This one-day conference provided a forum for discussing, across disciplines, work on diverse language communities, and two two-hour workshops which focused on videotaped interactions enabled presenters and audience alike to share their views and analytic techniques.

Three of the papers given at this conference make up this issue of *ial*, and taken together they crack the surface of Los Angeles to reveal the complex worlds of language and culture here. The article by Patricia Baquedano-López takes us inside a church in West Los Angeles where both Spanish language and English language religious education classes are held. Her analysis illuminates how Mexican American children construct their identities through the telling of the religious narrative of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*. By weaving analysis of children's identity construction together with a discussion of the internal politics of the church, this article also reveals the tension between the use of Spanish and English and the associated teaching practices in this community.

The article by Andrew Roth and David Olsher also compares different language practices and their institutional genesis: They compare language use of an LA public affairs radio program with that of a nationally broadcast TV interview show and illustrate how the LA program's unique ideology is reflected in the way the interviewer uses different types of "what about" questions. In doing so, Roth and Olsher begin to reflect on one of the conversational mechanisms through which ideology is enacted.

In the last article, Adrienne Lo examines how even single words can evoke entire ideologies as she analyzes the use of Korean, Japanese, English, and African American English Vernacular as they co-occur in a single conversation. By delving into each participant's different interpretation of particular words and the cultural practices that surround them, Lo's article illuminates how two Asian American men draw upon their local knowledge of the LA Korean American community in constituting ethnic identities.

Adrienne Lo, in addition to presenting at the conference, had already been working as part of *ial*'s editorial team, and is co-editor of this special issue. This issue of *ial* also marks Betsy Rymes' seventh and last as an *ial* editor. Taking her place will be Tanya Stivers and Anna Guthrie, who have both already spent considerable time acclimating themselves to the *ial* office and scrutinizing the pile of incoming manuscripts. In addition, they have both helped to organize this year's CLIC conference, the proceedings of which will comprise the next issue of *ial*. Best of luck to them, and here's to the continued prosperity (and temerity) of the journal.

June 1997

Betsy Rymes  
Adrienne Lo

# Some Standard Uses of “What about”- Prefaced Interrogatives in the Broadcast News Interview

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*Interrogatives (as linguistic objects, described by their grammatical features) and questioning (as a social action, responsive to prior actions and consequential for subsequent ones) can both serve as vehicles for a range of social activities. This article reports on one distinctive form of interrogative, the “what about”-prefaced interrogative, with a particular focus on its uses in broadcast news interviews. We analyze the internal composition and sequential position of “what about”-prefaced interrogatives and identify four standard uses of them by interviewers: pursuing a prior interviewee’s response, juxtaposing multiple interviewees’ positions, invoking a prior agenda, and proposing membership in a category. On the basis of this analysis, we consider how the recurrent use of this particular interrogative form can serve as an interactional means of instantiating a particular broadcasting “style,” thus contributing to distinctions among various public affairs programs.*

## GRAMMATICAL FORM, QUESTIONING, AND SOCIAL ACTION

The observation that an utterance takes the grammatical form of a interrogative does not guarantee that the action it implements is questioning (Schegloff 1984). An utterance’s status as an interrogative is defined in terms of grammar (see, e.g., Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech & Svartvik, 1985, pp. 806ff.); however, the uses of interrogatives in the commission of actions are not limited to - and, therefore, are not to be described exclusively in terms of - the activity of questioning. Instead, *interrogatives* (as linguistic objects, described by their grammatical features) and *questioning* (as a social action, responsive to prior actions and consequential for subsequent ones) can both serve as vehicles for a range of social activities. Thus, utterances that take the form of an interrogative can be (and are) relevantly treated—by their addressees, in the first place—for their capacity to implement a range of other actions, such as requesting (e.g., the often cited hypothetical illustration, *Can you pass the salt?*), or inviting (e.g., *Wanna cum down’n*

*av a bighta l:unch with me:?*, [see Drew, 1984, p. 135]), or even affiliating (see, e.g., Schegloff's [1984] analysis of the utterance *By what standard*).

This article provides a preliminary report on one distinctive form of interrogative, which we call the "what about"-prefaced interrogative. Fragment (1) exhibits an instance of a "what about"-prefaced interrogative (arrowed, at line 10), taken from ordinary conversation:<sup>1</sup>

- (1) [SN-4:1] ((Mark has been asking Sherry about the plans for her upcoming wedding.))
- 1 Mark: Didja e- by the way didja ever call up uh: Century City  
 2 CMMHotel 'n  
 3 (1.0)  
 4 Sherry: Y'know h'much they want fer a wedding<sub>↓</sub> It's incredible.  
 5 (0.5)  
 6 Sherry: We'd 'aftuh sell our house 'n car 'n evryt(h)hing  
 7 e(h)l(h)se [tuh pay fer the wedding .]  
 8 Mark: [Shhh'er house 'n yer car.]  
 9 (??): [(hh heh heh huh huh )]  
 10 Mark: → .hh What about the outside candlelight routine izzat  
 11 still gonna go on?  
 12 Sherry: No yih can't have outside candlelight it's a fi:re hazard.

Focusing on lines 10-11, notice that, although the initial unit of Mark's turn (*What about the outside candlelight routine*) takes the syntactic form of a WH-interrogative (Quirk, et al., 1985, pp. 817-823), Sherry does not respond to that unit as a question. Put another way, although Sherry might have treated Mark's turn as *possibly complete* on the production of *routine*, she does not begin to respond then, waiting to do so until Mark brings a second unit (*izzat still gonna go on?*, lines 10-11) to possible completion (on "possible completion" see Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974; Ford & Thompson, 1996). Although Sherry's response treats the "what about"-prefaced interrogative as *part of* a turn at talk that accomplishes questioning, she does not treat it as accomplishing that activity on its own. This raises the following issue as a topic for investigation: If the "what about"-prefaced interrogative is not accomplishing questioning *per se*, then what action(s) is it accomplishing?

In addition to occurring in ordinary conversation, as shown in the exchange between Mark and Sherry, "what about"-prefaced interrogatives also appear in a range of *institutional* settings (on "institutional" talk, see Drew & Heritage, 1992), including doctor-patient interactions, Presidential press conferences, and broadcast news interviews. In this article, we focus on the deployment of "what about"-prefaced interrogatives by interviewers in broadcast news interviews. Our immediate aim is to identify and describe four standard uses of "what about"-prefaced interrogatives in that institutional context. However, in developing an analysis of the different activities that a particular grammatical form (the "what about"-pref-

aced interrogative) can accomplish, we also undertake a more general investigation of the intertwined relationships between grammar, interaction, and institution (on grammar and interaction, see the contributions to Ochs, Schegloff, & Thompson, 1996; on grammar and institution, see Heritage & Roth, 1995): Thus, we pursue an account of how the recurrent use of this particular interrogative form might constitute one basis for differentiating various public affairs programs, and of how it might serve interviewers as a means of interactionally instantiating a particular broadcasting philosophy for such programs.

## THE PHENOMENON

Described in grammatical terms, "what about"-prefaced interrogatives consist of *at least* the interrogative *what* in combination with the preposition *about* plus a nominal (e.g., a noun, noun phrase or clause, or a pronoun). The following instances of "what about"-prefaced interrogatives from our corpus of broadcast news interviews exemplify interviewer turns that take this distinctive interrogative form.

**(2) [Which Way L.A.? 03/21/95:34]**

Interviewer: What about that David Koren?

**(3) [Meet the Press 04/16/93:18]**

Interviewer: What about Phil Gramm. Do you think...

**(4) [Which Way L.A.? 04/13/95:4-5]**

Interviewer: ...Now what about the race tracks (.) They are also...

**(5) [MacNeil/Lehrer 07/19/93b:3]**

Interviewer: ...Mister Terwilliger

—> what about (.) Mister Session's defense of not stepping down:: Did he do thuh right thing?...

By noting that such turns consist of "at least" *What about* + [*nominal*] we mean to draw attention to features of examples (2) - (5) such as the following:

- In actual, naturally occurring use, interviewers deploy "what about"-prefaced interrogatives in *both* turn-initial position (e.g., examples [2] and [3]) and in subsequent positions within a turn at talk (e.g., after an address term, as in example [5], or after the turn-initial "Now", as in example [4]); and
- A great many of the interviewer turns at talk in which "what about"-prefaced interrogatives occur consist of *two or more* "turn constructional units."<sup>2</sup> In the cases above, only in example (2) does the turn constructional unit containing the "what about"-prefaced interrogative constitute the entire turn at talk; in instances (3)-(5), by contrast, the "what about"-prefaced interrogative constitutes the first turn constructional unit of a *multi-unit* turn (recall, also, example [1], above).



To understand the action(s) that an interviewer can implement through use of a “what about”-prefaced interrogative, we must consider not just the turn’s *composition*, but also its sequential *position* within some ongoing talk (on turns’ “composition” and “position”, see, e.g., Schegloff, 1995, p. 194). Consider the example, in fragment (6), of a “what about”-prefaced interrogative (arrowed, at line 12), presented in its sequential context. (Here and throughout the rest of the article, we use the abbreviations *IR* and *IE* to refer to *interviewer* and *interviewee*, respectively.)

(6) [Meet The Press 04/16/95:18] ((IR=Lisa Myers, IE=Bob Dole))

- 1 IR: Senator a moment ago when you said the American people  
 2 d:on’t want extreme:s, I wondered who you were thinking  
 3 of.=Do you th:ink (.) that President Clinton represents  
 4 an extreme: point of view?  
 5 (0.2)  
 6 IE: .hh No: I’m just suggesting that Bob Dole would n:ot. Ah  
 7 I-I think in some cases ah- (.) I think thuh President’s  
 8 a li’l’ extreme on ta:xes fr:ankly, .hhh (.) ah: a little  
 9 extreme on government activity, but ah:: I- I’m not going  
 10 to refer to Pres:ident Clinton as an extremist....  
 11 ((8 subsequent lines of IE response deleted))  
 12 IR: —> What about Phil Gramm?=Do you think he represents an  
 13 extreme point of view?  
 14 IE: I don’t think so. I think Phil: ah: (0.2) keeps saying  
 15 he’s more conservative, but I’m reminded of th’ Na:tional  
 16 Journal report las:t year that showed me ten points more  
 17 conservative than Phil Gramm.

Observe the following features of these two question-answer sequences:

- The IR depicts the first of these questions (spanning lines 1-4) as having been prompted by a combination of (i) something the IE said earlier (i.e., *the American people d:on’t want extreme:s*, at lines 1-2) and (ii) the IR’s own reaction to that statement (*I wondered who you were thinking of*, lines 2-3).
- The formulation of this utterance projects that the ensuing question may involve a search for membership in a category.
- The interrogative unit (*Do you th:ink that...*, lines 3-4) solicits the IE’s opinion (e.g., the stress on *you* and the cognizing verb *think*) as to whether a particular person (*President Clinton*, line 3) belongs to the category in question (i.e., *represents an extreme: point of view*, lines 3-4).
- The IE response, although hedged in certain respects (see, e.g., lines 7-9), rejects depicting Clinton in those terms (i.e., *No:*, at line 6, and *I’m not going to refer to Pres:ident Clinton as an extremist*, lines 9-10).
- The IR’s subsequent *What about Phil Gramm?* - a “what about”-prefaced interrogative - maintains the activity focus of the IR’s prior questioning turn, by proposing another possible candidate (so to speak) member - *Phil Gramm* - of the

category of people whom the IE might consider as representing *an extreme point of view* (lines 12-13).

The IE declines to characterize Gramm as "extreme" (*I don't think so.*, line 14), and then shifts to compare and evaluate Gramm and himself in terms of their "conservative" status.

The IR's construction of the "what about"-prefaced interrogative - and, of the turn it inhabits - constitutes a choice among alternatives: The IR could have posed an altogether different question (e.g., pursuing the adequacy of the IE's response regarding Clinton, or initiating a new topic of questioning); likewise, the IR could have constructed an alternative version of the question actually posed (e.g., as a single-unit turn, "Does Phil Gramm represent an extreme point of view?").

On the basis of observations such as those above, a set of research topics arises: What does the IR accomplish by constructing her turn at lines 12-13 in just this way, with the "what about"-prefaced interrogative? Is this usage at all standard (i.e., recurrent and orderly) in the broadcast news interview? And, are there other, related but distinct standard uses of "what about"-prefaced interrogatives?

## THE DATA COLLECTION

Our analyses are based on a collection of 32 "what about"-prefaced interrogatives, drawn from a corpus of tape-recorded radio- and television-broadcast news interviews, and the transcripts of them. This collection includes every instance of the phenomenon in that corpus. Except as otherwise noted, the particular instances presented in this article are representative of the collection as a whole.

The corpus from which the collection is drawn comprises more than 20-hours of news interview interaction, taken from nationally-televised public affairs programs (ABC's *Nightline*, PBS's *MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour*, NBC's *Meet the Press*, CBS's *Face the Nation*, and ABC's *This Week with David Brinkley*) and a local, radio-broadcast program, KCRW's *Which Way L.A.*?<sup>3</sup>

Although readers may be somewhat familiar with the format and organization of the nationally-televised interview programs, they may not be similarly acquainted with the radio-broadcast program, *Which Way L.A.*? (hereafter referred to as *WWLA*), which differs in significant ways from its televised counterparts. Here we briefly introduce a few of *WWLA*'s distinctive features as a backdrop to the analyses that follow, and as a point of departure for a subsequent discussion of how one might investigate institutional differences among various broadcasting formats for public affairs programs.

All of the *WWLA* interviews in the corpus involve interviews conducted by telephone, an arrangement that is typical for the program: During the hour-long program, interviewees - who have been recruited to represent a range of perspectives on some topical issue, and whose "appearances" have been pre-scheduled - call into the studio; from the studio, the program's host and regular interviewer, Warren Olney, typically questions seven or eight such guests, none of whom are

necessarily "on the air" for the entire duration of the interview: Although many interviewees monitor the program's progress by telephone connection as they wait to be questioned, others may only be "on-line" via telephone during the segment of the interview in which they participate directly (see Collins, 1995). We refer to this organization of interviewee participation as a "revolving door" panel discussion; in our corpus, it is unique to WWLA.

This organization of interviewee participation presents the IR with practical issues regarding the maintenance and presentation of coherent interview agendas: The IR must maintain a coherent agenda as different IEs join and/or leave the program, with each IE possessing more or less knowledge of what positions have already been taken, by whom, and so forth; equally, the IR must present this dynamic arrangement of interviewee participation for members of the "overhearing" audience (Heritage, 1985), who may also be joining the program "in progress" (e.g., after the particular program's theme has been projected, after particular guests have been introduced, after some topics of questioning have been concluded, and as a current topic of questioning is underway).

### QUESTIONING AND THE TURN-TAKING ORGANIZATION OF BROADCAST NEWS INTERVIEWS

As conversation analysts studying news interview interaction have noted, the activity of questioning "in large part, *constitutes* the news interview as a social institution" (Heritage & Roth, 1995, p. 2, emphasis added). In brief, news interview talk is organized in terms of a formal, institutional *turn-taking system*<sup>4</sup> that makes questioning the central activity for participants' conduct (see, *inter alia*, Heritage & Greatbatch, 1991, as well as the citations to Clayman, Greatbatch, and Heritage in the references, below). This turn-taking system *pre-allocates* the order and the type of permissible turns at talk (on "pre-allocations" of turn-order and type, see Atkinson & Drew, 1979, pp. 61ff.): Thus, participants acting in the institutional roles of *interviewer* (IR) and *interviewee* (IE) should restrict themselves to asking questions and responding to them, respectively (see, e.g., Heritage & Greatbatch, 1991, pp. 97-99). In consequence, news interviews typically progress as series of IR questions and IE responses (recall, e.g., fragment [6], above).

For our purposes, one consequence of this organization of IR-IE participation is paramount. As indicated, this turn-taking system makes the accomplishment of IR questioning criterial for turn-transfer from IR to IE: On the production of a recognizable question, turn-transfer from IR to IE is relevant.<sup>5</sup>

This organization of conduct differentiates turn-taking in the news interview from its counterpart in ordinary conversation in at least one significant way. In ordinary conversation participants use syntax, intonation, and pragmatics as resources to monitor the progress of a current speaker's turn for its projectable completion point(s) (Sacks, et al., 1974; Ford & Thompson, 1996); and, unless a current



speaker does something particular to project otherwise, the first possible completion point of the speaker's first turn constructional unit constitutes an initial transition-relevance place (Sacks, et al., 1974, pp. 704, 709, 723, *passim.*). By contrast, in the news interview, the pre-allocation of turn-types affords IRs the *systematic* opportunity to produce *more than one* possibly-complete TCU without having thereby arrived at a transition-relevance place: Until some unit of an IR's turn accomplishes questioning, the IR's turn cannot be treated as complete, and turn transition, from IR to IE, is not (institutionally) relevant. Thus, from an IE's perspective, the practical task of monitoring an IR's current turn for its transition relevance place(s) consists of analyzing each TCU not only for its possible completion point(s) but also for whether or not it accomplishes the activity of questioning. Distributional analyses (Heritage & Roth, 1995) show a robust convergence of this normative organization with actual news interview conduct, across different interviews, covering different topics, and across different broadcast formats and societal boundaries.

An initial and continuing focus of our investigation of "what about"-prefaced interrogatives involves the observation that IRs and IEs do not systematically treat utterances with this interrogative form as accomplishing the institutionally-specified activity of questioning: In less than one-third of the instances in our data corpus (10 of 32) do IEs treat a "what about"-prefaced interrogative as having accomplished questioning on its own, so that the possible completion of the "what about"-prefaced interrogative generates IR-IE turn-transition. In the other 22 instances, by contrast, IR-IE turn transition does *not* occur on possible completion of a "what about"-prefaced interrogative. We are currently investigating our collection of "what about"-prefaced interrogatives and the turns that they inhabit with the aim of determining whether variations in their design features (composition) and/or their sequential placement (position) might account for IEs' different treatments of them. We reserve a report on this important feature of "what about"-prefaced interrogatives for a future occasion.

#### FOUR STANDARD USES OF "WHAT ABOUT" -PREFACED INTERROGATIVES

If the "what about"-prefaced interrogative does not always or exclusively accomplish questioning *per se*, then what (other) action - or actions - does it accomplish? In what follows we describe four standard IR uses of "what about"-prefaced interrogatives: Broadcast news interviewers use "what about"-prefaced interrogatives as components of turns that:

- *pursue a response*, following an IE turn that the IR treats as a non-answer;
- *juxtapose IEs' positions*, in contiguously placed question-answer sequences addressed to two different IEs;

- *invoke a prior agenda* - often attributed to one IE - as organizing a current line of questioning, addressed to another IE;
- *propose membership in a category*, in search of consistency or inconsistency in an IE's position.

In each of these distinct usages, the "what about"-prefaced interrogative contributes to the accomplishment of both the institutionally-specified activity of questioning and the particular action that the questioning turn implements.<sup>6</sup>

### Pursuing a Response

Interviewers use one form of "what about"-prefaced interrogative to depict the immediately prior IE turn as an inadequate answer to the previous question, and to pursue an adequate answer to that question. This use of "what about"-prefaced interrogatives is consistent with Greatbatch's account of IR *pursuits* (1986, pp. 108-118). In pursuing the prior turn as a non-answer, the IR selects the prior speaker as next speaker, as can be seen in example (7):

(7) [MacNeil/Lehrer 07/23/93:4-5] ((From a "debate" interview on the nomination of Joycelyn Elders as Surgeon General; IR=Jim Lehrer, IE=Walter Faggett, who supports her nomination; the proterm *she* at line 2 refers to Elders; *Mizz James* (line 4) refers to a co-IE, who opposes the nomination.))

- 1 IR: Ah: Doctor Faggett, how d'you- what is your:: ah: r-ah::  
 2 v:iew:: of: wh- of: whether or not she h:andled that  
 3 defective condom problem correctly in Arkansas; >Thuh one  
 4 that was from thuh tape, and you heard what Mizz James  
 5 just said about it. Th[u h d e C I S I O N]  
 6 IE: [(Well) she's right on] target. Right.  
 7 We have studies, Doctor Koenig and Doctor Leevy (.) ah in  
 8 San Francisco have good studies, published (0.2) .hh in a  
 9 journal in nineteeneightyni::ne .h ah in which is shown::  
 10 that (.) condoms used consistently and correctly pt have  
 11 a hundred- close to a hundred per cent (.) efficacy. I:t  
 12 depends a lo:t (.) on how they are used. Thuh studies that-  
 13 ah Miss James quotes in summa her articles, pt about three  
 14 hundred an' fifty patients, .h in Europe, (.) ah very  
 15 inconsistent use, .hh so again: itsa flaw::ed study, and it's  
 16 this [kinda] misrepresent[ation [that ( )]  
 17 IR: —> [But- ] [.h h h[But what about- what about  
 18 thuh spec:ific point that was rai:sed at thuh hearings today,  
 19 h'veen raised before:, was rai:sed at thuh hearings today:  
 20 that it .hh <that some: f:aulty deFEctive condoms were::  
 21 distributed> to young people in Arkansas:, .hh the Arkansas  
 22 Health Department (.) under her: u- leadership found ou:t

- 23 about it, .hh did not make a public announcement about it,  
 24 decided to go ahead 'cuz they- .hh well you hear:d what she  
 25 said.=Do you think tha[t was] thuh right decision to ma:ke?  
 26 IE: [Y eh-]  
 27 (0.5)  
 28 IE: A(hh)h Know:ing that ah: the use of condoms has only a  
 29 ten to fourteen per cent efficacy .hh to begin with: a  
 30 five per cent e:rror weight- rate is really with:in ah::  
 31 thuh ran:ge of acceptability. And I would (.) would submit  
 32 hh tha::t ah: F D A ha:s ah:: certified that female condoms  
 33 are-are useful. .hh But I figure this particular instance  
 34 ah-it's an overstatement .h of a non issue...

A brief, by no means exhaustive, description of the IR's question and the IE's response spanning lines 1-16 is necessary to appreciate the IR pursuit at lines 17ff. (arrowed): The first of the two IR questions shown here formulates a particular issue (*whether or not she handled that defective condom problem correctly in Arkansas?*, lines 2-3); the question also identifies the particular issue in terms of previous references to it in the broadcast: i.e., *Thuh one that was from thuh tape*, lines 3-4, referring to a pre-recorded report on the nomination hearing, broadcast prior to interview; as well as *you heard what Mizz James just said about it.*, lines 4-5, referring to a co-IE's (James') assessment of Elders' handling of the Arkansas case (as a potentially disqualifying aspect of the Elders' record).

When the IE responds in terms of studies that do not directly relate to the Arkansas case (e.g., lines 7-12, 12-15), focusing on the "flawed" character of those studies, the IR intersects the IE's turn-in-progress (note the overlapping talk at lines 16-17, initiated by the IR at points of the IE's TCU-so-far that are *not* possible completion points) with a distinctive form of "what about"-prefaced interrogative: *But what about...* (arrowed, lines 17ff.). The initial unit (which spans lines 17-24 in the transcript) of the IR's turn re-raises the issue of the distribution of defective condoms in Arkansas, under Elders' direction, as a matter for the IE to address. In doing so, it treats the IE's prior turn as a non-answer to the initial question (see Greatbatch, 1986).<sup>7</sup>

In our collection of "what about"-prefaced interrogatives, those that take the form *But + what about + [nominal]* systematically, and without exception, engage in the activity of pursuing a response. It appears that, in the context of broadcast news interviews, the construction *But what about...* is "virtually dedicated" (cf. Schegloff, 1995, p. 194) to accomplishing this particular activity.

A reconsideration of example (6), above—especially of the utterance *What about Phil Gramm?*—might seem to suggest that it, too, is deployed in pursuit of an answer. There is, however, a significant difference between the instances of *But what about...* (which we characterize as pursuits) and the IR's *What about Phil Gramm?...*, in (6). This difference hinges on the IRs' different treatments of each IE's prior turn: Whereas the IR's *But what about*-prefaced utterance in (7) treats that IE's prior turn as an inadequate answer to the question (that is, the IE has not

addressed the *specific point* regarding the *faulty defective condoms*), in fragment (6) the IR's *What about Phil Gramm?*... does *not* contest the adequacy of that IE's response as an answer to the question. The IR does not, in other words, pursue the IE's assessment of Clinton, as something other than an *extremist*.

Rather, the IR's *What about Phil Gramm?* and its continuation *maintain an activity* that the prior question initiated and constituted one particular instantiation of: The search for people whom the IE considers *extreme*, a category of persons that can have more than one candidate member. In asking *What about Phil Gramm?*=*Do you think he represents an extreme point of view?* the IR maintains the activity of searching for possible members of that category (see the discussion of "proposing membership in a category," below). Thus, rather than understanding *What about Phil Gramm?*... as a pursuit of the prior question-answer sequence, it is to be understood as the continuation of an activity—proposing membership in a category—that spans multiple sequences (cf. Heritage & Sorjonen, 1994). In this view, the action undertaken by the IR's *What about Phil Gramm?* goes beyond the phenomenon Greatbatch (1986, pp. 108-118) identifies as "pursuing," and the two IR turns in (6) and (7) cannot be treated as undertaking similar actions.

### Juxtaposing Perspectives

Interviewers use "what about"-prefaced interrogatives to solicit juxtapositions of IEs' positions on some matter. This usage is characterized by IRs' deployment of the indexical *that* as the nominal following *what about*. Situated just after one IE's response, an IR can accomplish questioning by asking *What about that*, which is typically deployed in conjunction with an address term, to specify a new next speaker (recall, e.g., [2], above). A particular sequential context, involving the participation of multiple IEs, is thus constituted through the design of the IR's "what about"-prefaced interrogative:

- 1 IR: Question, addressed to IE1
- 2 IE1: Response
- 3 IR: —> *What about that* - addressed to IE2
- 4 IE2: Response

Interactionally, the *What about that* construction allows the IR to engage two IEs in a *mediated* exchange of alternative (and perhaps contesting) perspectives.

In this sequential environment, IEs' sometimes treat the formulation *What about that* plus an address term as accomplishing questioning in its own right. Fragment (8) is an example of this sort:

- (8) [Which Way L.A.? 04/25/95:20-22] ((On possible connections between Republican rhetoric and extremist violence, in the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing; In this fragment, IE1 (Mark Milman, a leading strategist for the Democratic party), has just contrasted the position of certain Republican members of Congress before and after the bombing, especially with regard to those Republicans' stance toward militias.



IE2 (David Brooks, an editor for the *Wall Street Journal*) has earlier contended that the incident is "not related to Republican versus Democratic politics.")

- 1 IE1: ...so now wha- we're talkin' about a debate that- that  
 2 is about how to .hh increase the investigative powers of  
 3 the F B I: (.) in dealing with these cases.=but you had met  
 4 Republican members of Congress (.) before this incident  
 5 took place .hh saying get off the backs of these militias  
 6 let's restrict (.) the fa- ability of the Federal government  
 7 to investigate these militia[s.=so]  
 8 IR: —> [umhm ] .hh what about that  
 9 eh Mister Brooks.  
 10 IE2: Well I think uh we do need to give them more power....

The IR's interrogative *what about that* deploys the indexical *that* to refer to the position IE1 has taken, without explicitly formulating that position in any way (on IRs' "formulations", see Heritage, 1985). By responding after the IR selects him as next speaker (line 9), IE2 displays his understanding of the IR's turn as having accomplished questioning. In responding to the IR's question, the IE takes a position on one aspect of IE1's prior turn, the issue of whether the FBI and, more generally, the Federal government (see lines 2-3 and 6, respectively) should have more investigative powers; in doing so, IE2 does not address a potentially more divisive aspect of IE1's turn, the suggestion - implemented through a contrast-structure (cf. *Now ... we're talking about...*, at lines 1-3, and *but you had...*, at lines 3-7) - that Republicans have taken a potentially expedient, inconsistent stance toward the issue. In this instance, then, IE2 treats *what about that* as a solicitation of his viewpoint on (an aspect of) IE1's turn, but does not treat it as having solicited a contrasting perspective from him.

The "selective" character of IE2' response is possible, in part, because *What about that?* has been treated - by the IR and IE2 - as accomplishing questioning. This "free-standing" use of *What about that?* affords the IE a potentially wide range of interpretation due to the unspecified referent of the proterm *that*.

By contrast, in other instances when IRs deploy *What about that?* to elicit a position by one IE on a prior IE's talk, they construct the interrogative form as the *first* unit of a *multi-unit* turn. The turn's subsequent unit(s) can then specify the particular aspect of IE1's turn to which the indexical *that* refers. An example of this sort can be seen in (9):

- (9) [MacNeil/Lehrer 7/19/93b:2-3] ((On the firing of FBI Director William Sessions; in lines 1-5, IE1 (George Terwilliger, who was involved with the Attorney General's report investigating Sessions' ethics) characterizes Sessions' refusal to step down, which forced the President to fire him. IE2 is Congressman Don Edwards, a member of the House committee that oversees the FBI; the IR is Charlayne Hunter-Gault.))

- 1 IE1: ...Ah that's fairly astounding in and of itsel:f to me.  
 2 I think if thuh President indicates to: .hh a high  
 3 government official that it's time to go:, then it's  
 4 time to go. .hh Absent s:ome very articulable (.) ah:  
 5 inappropriate reason for thuh reques::[t.  
 6 IR: —> [.hhh What about  
 7 —> that Congressman Edwards. Ah::: the- the abrupt calling  
 8 back and so on an::d the refusal- uh prompted in part by  
 9 thuh refusal .hh ah: of uh Mister Sessions to step down.  
 10 How do you think that part of it was handled?  
 11 IE2: .Tch well: that has been h:andled ahm in a mixed way by  
 12 everybody over thuh past three months. But it was han:dled  
 13 so: badly (0.2) by former Attorney General Barr:: who'd  
 14 brought this report ou:t, gave it to reporters, didn't  
 15 (0.2) ah: even clue in the Director himsel::f....

At lines 6-7, the IR solicits a response to IE1's position by IE2; the IR's turn-so-far is thus similar with the IR turn in example (8). However, in contrast with the instance in (8), the IR in this example extends her turn (lines 7-10), both (i) specifying the particular referent of *that* (lines 7-9) and (ii) posing a particular question for IE2 to address (line 10).

In response, IE2 gives an answer that contrasts with the position taken by IE1. Whereas IE1 has taken the position that Sessions in particular is responsible for the situation that resulted in his refusal to resign and its consequences, IE2 suggests that *everybody* involved shares some burden of the responsibility (lines 11-12); furthermore, IE2 suggests that the handling of the report itself was done *badly* (lines 12-15), a position that not only contrasts with IE1's stance, but could also be taken as a challenge to IE1, who worked for Attorney General Barr in producing the report. Here, then, the IR's *what about that* plus the subsequent formulation, specifying the referent of the indexical *that*, serves to produce an instance of IR-mediated debate between the two IEs.

### Invoking an Agenda

When IRs use a "what about"-prefaced interrogative to juxtapose two IEs' perspectives, the utterance has the effect of linking two *contiguous* question-answer sequences, addressed to different IEs. However, this is not the only sequential context in which an IR can solicit one IE's position on statements made by another IE: In a great many other cases, IRs use "what about"-prefaced interrogatives not to juxtapose the position of IE2 with the immediately prior talk by IE1, but rather as a device for invoking another IE's prior—but now remote (rather than contiguous)—talk as an agenda for questioning another, currently-addressed IE. This use of a "what about"-prefaced question thus constitutes a *different sequential context* than in the case of the juxtaposing positions usage:

- 1 IR: question, addressed to IE1
- 2 IE1: response
- 3 IR: —> *what about* + [invocation of prior agenda], addressed to IE1
- 4 IE1: response

The crucial difference between this sequential context and that of the juxtaposing positions usage is that, in this case, the "what about"-prefaced interrogative addresses the prior speaker. Thus, to invoke another IE's position, the IR cannot simply *refer* to it with an indexical such as *that* (as in example [8], above); instead the IR must *formulate* the other IE's position. This difference inflects the construction of IRs' "what about"-prefaced interrogatives and the turns they inhabit in significant ways. Consider, for instance, example (10):

(10) [MacNeil/Lehrer 07/19/93a:7-8] ((On President Clinton's "don't ask, don't tell" policy for homosexuals in the military; here the IE (Tanya Domi, a supporter of the policy, and formerly a Captain in the U.S. Army) rebuts the charge of a co-IE (U.S. Army Colonel Bob Maginnis, referred to as *thuh Colonel* at line 10) that it will cause decreases in enlistment.))

- 1 IE: ...if they're not going to come in: .hh ah: because
- 2 of this policy .hh then perhaps that's probably best
- 3 ah in *thuh* long run I think *thuh* President wants *tuh*
- 4 .hhh set ah: a standard of how people should be treated.
- 5 I- I 'gree with uh Congressman Frank.=It's not anywhere
- 6 near what we wanted. .hh But ah he has attempted to move
- 7 this ah issue [f o rward.]
- 8 IR: —> [What about] the unit cohe:sion issue.=
- 9 You're a f:ormer company commander,=your v:iew of what
- 10 *thuh Colonel* said.
- 11 IE: .hhhh Well everyone s:ays right now: that unit cohesion
- 12 (.) would be: uh denigrated .hhh by: ah allowing openly
- 13 gay and lesbian people to ser:ve: .hh but in fact every
- 14 study that's been commissioned by *thuh* Department of
- 15 Defense .hh including *thuh* Government Accounting Office's
- 16 report .hh has indicated .h that it should be lifted,
- 17 en that .h <it is on:ly> mere speculation on *thuh* part
- 18 of people, .h and we know, and *thuh* Colonel does know
- 19 this as well:, .hh is that positive leadership .hh is-
- 20 is the example of- <by which (.) military people f:ollow.

After Captain Domi has addressed (at lines 1-7) one of the criticisms made by another IE of the new policy, the IR's "what about"-prefaced interrogative (arrowed, at line 8) raises another facet of the policy for her to address, *the unit cohesion issue*. This formulation invokes her co-IE's (Colonel Maginnis's) earlier reference to, and expressed concern for, the policy's effect on "cohesion" (i.e., "We're concerned about cohesion....this is going to damage cohesion." MacNeil/Lehrer, 07/19/93a:6).

In the subsequent units of his questioning turn, the IR describes Captain Domi in terms that portray her as comparable to the co-IE, Colonel Maginnis (line 9),<sup>8</sup> and the IR solicits her reaction to the position taken by *thuh Colonel* (lines 9-10). The IR's turn can thus be understood as implementing a particular sort of challenge to Captain Domi's position that the policy is good for the military: First, the IR's turn proposes *the unit cohe:sion issue* as an aspect of the policy that might undermine Captain Domi's position; second, by attributing "cohesion" as a concern to the co-IE (Colonel Maginnis), the IR's turn portrays the co-IE as the source of the challenge, so that the IR's turn may serve to generate disagreement between the two IEs (see Clayman, 1992, pp. 176-178; Greatbatch, 1992, pp. 277-280).

By invoking aspects of Colonel Maginnis's prior-stated (but now sequentially remote) position for Captain Domi to respond to, the IR in effect constitutes one type of a *line of questioning*: Specifically, in this case, having addressed a prior series of questions to Colonel Maginnis to solicit *his* concerns regarding the new policy, the IR deploys the points made by Colonel Maginnis in response as a template for a series of questions addressed to Captain Domi, with the upshot that each of *her* responses can be understood as counterpoint to what the Colonel said earlier.

Another instance of the role that "what about"-prefaced interrogatives can play in constituting a line of questioning can be seen in (11):

(11) [Which Way L.A.? 4/13/95:26-28] ((On proposed legislation to expand legal card-club gambling in California. Here, IR Warren Olney questions Los Angeles Police Department Captain John Higgins, a vice detective; *Mister Carger*, mentioned by the IR at line 3, is a co-IE, who earlier in the interview advocated expansion. In beginning to interview Higgins, the IR has asked about the nature of gambling in Los Angeles and how it would change on implementation of the proposed legislation. At lines 1-2, Higgins completes a response to the question of "How much [illegal gambling] goes on anyway?"))

- 1 IE: ...but certainly book-making: is uh (.) pretty prevalent
- 2 throughout the city.
- 3 IR: —> Um hmm .h uh:: what about uh uh: Mister Carger ta- Carger's
- 4 contention that there's enough gambling going on and it's
- 5 going to go on anyway illegally .h we might as well let it
- 6 go on legally and uh tax it. get some revenue off it.
- 7 IE: Well I think that's a: position a lot of people use
- 8 (.) when you just worry about chasin' the dollars, and
- 9 not worrying about thuh quality of li:fe and the impact
- 10 it has on the community. .hhh I have a report that was...

The IR's "what about"-prefaced interrogative links the turn it is a part of (lines 3-6) with two prior question-answer sequences. Most proximately, it builds on the immediately prior question-answer sequence (described above), which has, in effect, involved Higgins in confirming the premise of Carger's position, that illegal



gambling occurs in Los Angeles. At the same time, the "what about"-prefaced interrogative re-presents Carger's position—elicited by the IR in an even earlier question-answer sequenc—for Higgins's response.

Here, then, the "what about"-prefaced interrogative brings a line of questioning, addressed to Higgins, to its culminating question: If Carger is correct regarding the extent of gambling in Los Angeles (as Higgins has just confirmed), then does Higgins also support Carger's proposed solution, i.e., to legalize gambling so as to collect tax revenue on it? Higgins' response rejects his co-IE's position, by characterizing it as popular (i.e., *a: position a lot of people use*, at line 7) but only under specific, undesirable conditions (i.e., *when you just worry about chasin' the dollars...*, at lines 8ff): The contrast structure (*just worry about ...*, and *not worrying about ...*, lines 8-10) provides an ethical rationale for Higgins's opposition to his co-IE's contention. Moreover, in the next unit of his turn, Higgins invokes *a report* (line 10), as further, "factual" support for his position (data not fully shown). (Cf. example [10], above, for a similar contrastive construction, in which the IE [Captain Domi] differentiates between a popularly-held position [i.e., *everyone s:ays...*, at lines 11-13] and what she presents as evidence that undermines its credibility [i.e., *but in fact every study...*, at lines 13ff.)

The analyses of examples (10) and (11), as well as of comparable instances from other multi-IE interviews, suggest that IRs use "what about"-prefaced interrogatives to invoke an aspect of a prior (but now sequentially remote) agenda, involving IE1, where that prior agenda serves as the template for a current series of questions, addressed to IE2, that constitute a *line of questioning*. In a line of questioning of this particular type, the "what about"-prefaced interrogative recurrently serves as a *subsequent* or *culminating* component (e.g., fragments [10] & [11], respectively) in the line of questioning.

### Proposing Membership in a Set

IRs use "what about"-prefaced interrogatives to solicit an IE's confirmation - or rejection - of a nominal object as a proposed member of some categorization device. We have already considered one such instance of this sort, example (6). This usage of "what about"-prefaced interrogatives is *reflexive*: In offering some *X* as a member of a categorization device, the device itself is constituted; at the same time, it is the operation of this categorization that informs the participants' (and the audience members') understanding of the relevance of any particular potential member. To make this concrete: Consider the following representative case, from an interview with Attorney General Janet Reno. In the questioning turns prior to this fragment, the IR asked Reno to comment on whether the government might begin to regulate the level of television violence. In responding, Reno has rejected direct government regulation as a possibility and, instead, has emphasized the need for both the industry and the audience to be self-regulating.

## (12) Meet the Press 10/24/93:10

- 1 IE: ...No:body is immune: .h from: a role: in addressing thuh  
 2 issue of violence in Ameri[ca.  
 3 IR: —> [ .hhhh What abou:t sex? (.) Thuh  
 4 level of sex seen on thuh afternoon soap operas? Is tha:t  
 5 (.) something that children should be exposed to, and would  
 6 you (.) take that off: the afternoon hours?  
 7 IE: I think you've g- again: have got to loo:k: at working wit  
 8 the: television industry...

In this sequential context, the IR's *What about sex?* (arrowed, line 3) can be understood as proposing that *sex* is similar—in some way—to *violence*. A determination of *how* they are similar depends on the IR conveying—and the IE and audience recognizing—a coherent link between this questioning turn and the immediately prior agenda. Following a question-answer sequence addressing the possible government regulation of programs with violent content, the IR's reference to *sex* and subsequent specification of it as *the level of sex seen on thuh afternoon soap operas* is hearable as a *second* instance of what can now be appreciated as a more general category: troublesome television content that the IE, in her role as Attorney General, might treat as subject to government regulation. In this way, the IR's "what about"-prefaced interrogative contributes to the realization of this question as linked-to and dependent-on the prior question-answer sequence. Notably, the design of Reno's answer displays her orientation to this as well: Having begun to respond (*I think you've g-*, line 9), Reno re-starts her response to include *again*, invoking her prior response regarding violence, and projecting that her position on this issue will be similar.

## DISCUSSION: ON THE AVAILABILITY OF VARIATION IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAMS

Based on preliminary data analyses, we first expected that variations in the deployment of "what about"-prefaced interrogatives might be one basis for differentiating news interview programs, and that expectation motivated our initial investigation. Although subsequent, intensive data analyses suggest that the fundamental interactional nature of these turns (including their composition, their position, and *in toto* the actions that they implement) is consistent across the programs in our data base, we conclude this paper with a brief discussion of how the comparative study of different public affairs programs might profit from investigating the design features of various questioning forms and variations in their use across different broadcasting formats.

This study started with an interest not only in the uses of "what about"-prefaced interrogatives, but also in the ways that their deployment might distinguish the local National Public Radio broadcast *Which Way L.A.?* from its nationally-broadcast television counterparts such as *Nightline* and the *MacNeil/Lehrer News*

*Hour* (now, after Robin MacNeil's retirement, just *The News Hour*). As for the uses that this interrogative form is put to, we found no differences between programs: Across all the programs in our data base, IRs use "what about"-prefaced interrogatives, and the features of these interrogatives' construction and their uses are robust across the different programs, across different broadcasts within each program, across a variety of topical agendas, and across different IRs and IEs.

These findings provide a preliminary basis for considering one potentially significant difference in IRs' deployments of "what about"-prefaced interrogatives: Comparing *WWLA* with the other news interview programs in our corpus, we find a potentially significant difference in the *frequency* with which IRs deploy "what about"-prefaced interrogatives. It appears that on *WWLA* Warren Olney uses them significantly more often than do his counterparts from the other programs in our data corpus.<sup>9</sup> In fact, the frequency of the "what about"-prefaced interrogative in *WWLA* makes it a readily recognizable trait of the program and Olney's interviewing style. However, variations in frequency of use might simply reflect an IR's personal speaking style or habit rather than an interactionally-significant speaking practice. Although we do not yet have a final account of this issue, we do have some preliminary explanations suggesting that variations in the frequency of this practice may be linked to programming formats as well as constitutive of a particular program's (i.e., *WWLA*'s) tone and character.<sup>10</sup>

We suspect that the apparently more frequent use of "what about"-prefaced interrogatives on *WWLA* may be linked to the program's distinctive format, which involves a greater number of IEs on the broadcast at one time than the other interview programs in our data base. And, in turn, that format is inextricably linked with the program's stated aim of providing in-depth news coverage of, in the words of *WWLA*'s tagline, "issues Southern Californians care about", with a designedly multi-perspectival, problem-solving orientation. Thus host and interviewer Warren Olney describes the *WWLA* format as aimed at "surrounding an issue with multiple points of view."<sup>11</sup> In the discussion that follows, we offer a preliminary attempt at drawing linkages between this goal of *WWLA* as a public affairs program and the interactional practices through which participants on *WWLA* construct their contributions *as* news interview talk. This discussion introduces some themes for subsequent investigation.

We begin by noting that, as (part of) a philosophy of public affairs broadcasting, the goal of "surrounding an issue with multiple points of view" is *fundamentally interactional in character*. For any given broadcast, Olney depends on a number of participants to *instantiate*—interactionally—those "multiple points of view," and he depends on the actions implemented through his questioning turns as the means of managing those participants' contributions to the program and their conduct towards one another. Specifically, as *WWLA* co-producer Daniel Hinerfield describes, "What we're trying to do is make sure that whatever important arguments one guest will make, the others will be able to respond to it" (Collins, 1995, p. 4). In consequence, *WWLA* may be understood as an institutional setting

in which confrontations are not forced but juxtapositions are required (recall, e.g., the differences noted above between examples [8] and [9], above).

In its various uses, the “what about”-prefaced interrogative seems specially suited to meeting this interactional/institutional requirement. Its utility in this regard hinges on what we will call the “what about”-prefaced interrogative’s *pointing* character, which we intend in at least two senses. First, the grammatical construction of this interrogative form *directs attention to* the nominal object of *about* as a matter for comment by the addressed interviewee, much as a hunting dog’s stance directs attention to the presence and place of game. As an attention-directing device, the “what about”-prefaced interrogative handles one of the basic tasks charged to Olney, the “live” and “on-air” management of multiple IEs’ participation in a revolving door panel discussion. With this interrogative form, Olney can invoke (and *reinvoke*) a point of view, which may have preceded a particular IE’s participation, for comment by that IE (recall the discussion of “Invoking an Agenda,” above). Thus, the pointing character of the “what about”-prefaced interrogative—as a device for drawing attention to a particular object of questioning—makes it a powerful questioning practice for the construction and maintenance of an interviewing agenda; indeed, it may contribute to the overhearing audience’s sense of an ongoing, coherent, and even “seamless” dialogue, even as different interviewees join and/or leave the program.

The “what about”-prefaced interrogative exhibits a second, related pointing character: This interrogative form allows Olney (and other IRs) to, in effect, *sharpen* a juxtaposition, between two or more interviewees and the alternative perspectives that they may represent. The *What about + [nominal]* format allows the IR to formulate (or refer to, in the case of *What about that?*) the gist of one IE’s perspective as the nominal object of the interrogative, for another IE’s comment. By presenting one IE’s position to another IE for comment, this interrogative form *establishes relationships, potentially of juxtaposition, between co-interviewees and the positions that they represent* (see, e.g., examples [8-11]). Thus presenting the play of multiple opinions - rather than two-sided, agonistic debate - is one interactional product of this form of questioning.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, we propose that it is this organization of interviewee participation, more generally, that contributes to the character of *WWLA* as a sort of “town forum” in which IEs’ alternative perspectives are mediated by the IR’s questioning turns, and this focus differentiates the “content” of *WWLA* from that of the other news interview programs in our corpus.

As this concluding discussion suggests, this outcome (or the lack of it) is the result of a process that cannot be accomplished in the abstract, as if it were exclusively a matter of alternative broadcasting philosophies, but instead must be progressively talked into being through situated interactional practices whose organization and consequences are available for detailed analysis. Further advances in our understanding of significant variations in interviewing styles, the broadcasting philosophies that underlie them, and the public affairs programs with which these



are associated will depend on just such detailed, interactionally-grounded analyses.

## CONCLUSION

We have described a particular form of interrogative, the "what about"-prefaced interrogative, and four standard uses of it in the context of the broadcast news interview. In characterizing the form and the actions that IRs implement through it, we have considered the composition and position of IRs' turns, as well as IEs' responses to them, as resources for our analysis. Such an investigation further underscores the importance of understanding utterances in terms of their *relevances as and for actions*, and in terms of the *sequential contexts* in which they occur, two themes that are systematically emphasized in conversation analysis and related forms of inquiry into talk-in-interaction.

At the same time, we have sought to extend that analysis - in what is presently a preliminary and speculative manner - by considering some possible linkages between the recurrent uses of the "what about"-prefaced interrogative and the broadcast philosophy that underlies a particular public affairs program, *Which Way L.A.*? In doing so, we aim to suggest the possibility for and the desirability of grounding analyses of variations in the ideological "content" of different public affairs programs (which are typically treated as matters of *mass* communication) in the details of interactions between IRs and IEs and among IEs (which might be conventionally analyzed as instances of *interpersonal* communication). Though the claims made here in this regard are admittedly preliminary in character, they seem sufficiently robust to encourage subsequent investigation of public affairs programs along the lines sketched in this report.

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## APPENDIX: TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

This paper uses transcript conventions originally developed by Gail Jefferson and now widely used by analysts of talk-in-interaction. In our transcripts, speakers are identified in terms of the institutional roles of *interviewer* (IR) and *interviewee* (IE). The following list explains the transcription symbols used here:

IR: What about <u>that</u> ?	<i>Underlined items</i> were markedly stressed.
IR: What about tha::t?	<i>Colon(s)</i> indicate prolonging of the prior sound.
IR: What- what about that?	<i>A hyphen</i> denotes a "cut-off" sound.
IR: What about .hh that?	<i>Strings of "h" preceded by a period</i> mark audible inbreath. The longer the string, the longer the inbreath.
IR: What about (0.3) that?	<i>Numbers in parentheses</i> indicate elapsed silence in tenths of seconds; a period denotes a micropause of less than 0.2 seconds.
IR: What about that?= IE: =Well Jim...	<i>Equal signs</i> indicate one event following another with no intervening silence.
IR: What about th[at? IE: [That's not so.	<i>Brackets</i> mark the onset of simultaneous talk.
Punctuation (periods, question marks, and commas) denote changes in intonation, rather than conventional grammatical units.	
IR: What about that.	<i>Periods</i> indicate falling intonation, but not necessarily the end of a sentence.
IR: What about that?	<i>Question marks</i> indicate rising inflection, but not necessarily a question.
IR: What about that,	<i>Commas</i> indicate continuing intonation, but not necessarily between clauses of sentences.

For a more detailed account of transcription conventions, see Atkinson and Heritage (1984, pp. ix-xvi). The transcripts presented in this paper have been simplified from more detailed originals.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See the Appendix for an explanation of the transcription symbols used in this paper.

<sup>2</sup> *Turn constructional units* (or TCUs) are the grammatical "building blocks" with which speakers set out to construct turns at talk. These units include sentential, clausal, phrasal and lexical constructions; see Sacks, et al. (1974) and Ford & Thompson (1996).

<sup>3</sup> KCRW is the Santa Monica-affiliate of National Public Radio.

<sup>4</sup> Accounts of *turn-taking* in the news interview (as well as in other institutional contexts) are premised on pioneering work by Sacks, et al. (1974), who described the organization of ordinary conversation in terms of a locally-managed turn-taking system, and argued that the organization of turn-taking in other, institutional contexts could be understood as *specializations* of this most basic system (see also, Drew & Heritage, 1992, pp. 25-27).

<sup>5</sup> The management of turn-transition - from IR to IE, on the production of questioning - is the *interactional* product of (i) conduct by IRs - in designing each successive unit of their turns to be recognizable as accomplishing questioning or not - and (ii) the withholding of conduct by IEs - who refrain from talking until an IR's turn-so-far accomplishes questioning. See Clayman (1988), Heritage & Greatbatch (1991, pp. 99-101), and Heritage & Roth (1995, p. 18).

<sup>6</sup> The four standard uses of "what about"-prefaced interrogatives that we identify and describe in this article are systematic and massively recurrent in our data corpus. However, it would be premature to claim that these four standard uses are the only standard uses of this interrogative form; indeed, we anticipate that there may be other systematic, recurrent uses, which await identification and analysis.

<sup>7</sup> Note that, in doing so, the IR starts and restarts his turn at least three times (*But- ... .hhh But what about- what about thuh...*), a phenomenon that Schegloff (1986), studying the production of overlapping talk in ordinary conversation, characterizes as a "recycled turn beginning." In example (7), the IR's recyclings of *But* and *what about* underscore the importance of these particular lexical items to the action that the IR undertakes.

<sup>8</sup> On the relevance and consequentiality of the IR's description of the IE as a *former company commander*, see Roth (1998).

<sup>9</sup> We say "It appears...", thus hedging this claim, in acknowledgement of the complex issues - as raised by Schegloff (1993) - that investigators must address in order to undertake quantitative analyses of interactional conduct (see also, Heritage & Roth, 1995). Our analysis of "what about"-prefaced interrogatives does not depend on a quantitative assessment; however, claims about variation in the relative frequency of the use of this interrogative form across broadcast formats do. Rather than undertaking such a quantitative analysis, this article contributes a foundation on which it might be built: If the aim of subsequent research is to evaluate variations in the *frequencies* with which different IRs deploy "what about"-prefaced interrogatives (cf. Schegloff, 1993, pp. 102-103), then (i) describing the construction of the "what about"-prefaced interrogative contributes to our understanding of the appropriate *numerator*; and (ii) describing an array of its standard uses contributes to an understanding of the *denominator*, by beginning to specify what Schegloff (1993, p. 103) refers to as the "environments of relevant possible occurrence" for the phenomenon.

<sup>10</sup> Some anecdotal evidence that the practice is linked to the format and style of the program as opposed to the interviewer's personal habits can be found by comparing interviewer Olney's questioning practices in a live debate between two public figures on a California ballot initiative (WWLA, 22 October 1996). Although Olney moderated this debate as an

installment of *WWLA*, the format differed significantly from the usual call-in organization: The program was cast as a debate, with just two guests; and it was held in the ballroom of an elite hotel, with the interviewer and guests speaking from podiums before a co-present audience. Of note in the part of the debate conducted in interview format is the absence of any "what about"-prefaced interrogatives, even when Olney sought to elicit one debater's response to another's positions. The differences of format, of the participants' co-presence, and of the formality of the occasion may all be significant in this absence.

<sup>11</sup> Interview (by D.O.) of Warren Olney, November 10, 1996.

<sup>12</sup> For a critique of public affairs programs' over-reliance on two-sided, agonistic debate (typically pitting Democrat versus Republican) and an analysis of how it limits public, democratic discourse about politics, see Croteau & Hoynes (1994). Media critics have lauded *WWLA* for breaking from this convention of public affairs reportage. For example, according to Marde Gregory, Associate Director of UCLA's Center for Communication Policy, *WWLA* "explores every possible point of view, not just 'both' points of view, allowing the listener to make his [or her] own decisions..." (quoted in Collins, 1995, p. 1)

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# Creating Social Identities through *Doctrina* Narratives

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*This study describes narrative activity in a doctrina class (children's religious education class in Spanish) composed of Mexican immigrants at a Catholic parish in Los Angeles. During the telling of the narrative of the apparition of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe (Our Lady of Guadalupe) doctrina students and their teacher collaboratively construct a multiplicity of identities in an ongoing narrative version. These past and present identities are represented as Mexican, de aquí (from here), and dark-skinned against the backdrop of the description of an oppressive colonial past in Mexico. The paper compares a doctrina class with a racially mixed religious education class conducted in English (catechism) at the same parish to illustrate differences in the way social identities are created in both classes.*

This study describes how teachers and students in *doctrina* class (a religious education class in Spanish) composed of Mexican immigrants at a Catholic parish in Los Angeles construct social identities in the course of telling the narrative of the apparition of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* (Our Lady of Guadalupe). During the telling of this narrative, *doctrina* teachers at the parish of St. Paul<sup>1</sup> employ several discursive and interactional resources to represent a multiplicity of identities within a coherent collective narrative, establishing in this way links to traditional Mexican world views. Like narratives of personal experience, this traditional narrative organizes collective experience in a temporal continuum, extending past experience into the present (Heidegger, 1962; Ricoeur 1985/1988; Polkinghorne, 1988; Bruner, 1990; Brockelman, 1992; Ochs, 1994; Ochs & Capps, 1996).

## NARRATING THE COLLECTIVITY

Through narrative we relate not only events, but also stances and dispositions towards those events (Labov & Waletzky, 1968). While they emerge from experience, narratives also shape experience (Ochs & Capps, 1996); thus, we tell our stories for their potency to explain, rationalize, and delineate past, present, and possible experience. As collaborative undertakings, narratives are co-told and designed with the audience's input; addressing an audience's present and even future concerns (Duranti & Brenneis, 1986; Ochs, 1994). Stories of personal experience are told from present perspectives, from the here and now, evoking present emotions and creating present experiences for both narrator and audience (Capps & Ochs, 1995; Ochs and Capps, 1996; Heidegger, 1962; Ricoeur 1985/1988). Col-

lective narratives, which tell the experiences of a group, organize diversity in the collectivity. And while they tend to normalize the existing status quo, Chatterjee (1993) reminds us that they can also be expressions of resistances in the face of master storylines. Morgan (1995) has noted that certain narratives of African-American experience, in particular those alluding to the times of slavery, contest and resist both past and present experience. Through indirection and linguistic “camouflage,” story-tellers describe and explain a collective history of African Americans as an economically exploited and socially marginalized minority group. Like these stories of African American collective experience, *doctrina* narratives of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* also create explanations for the social worlds of *doctrina* teachers and students as a community with past experiences of oppression. This is achieved in part by *doctrina* classroom narrative activity in which narrated events are brought to bear upon ongoing class discussion, illustrating how past experience might continue to influence and shape the present. Indeed, at *doctrina*, a traditional religious narrative becomes not only a story to live by, it affirms and contests the community’s past, present, and possible stories.

### The Narrative

In Los Angeles, a city with a large Mexican population, one does not need to journey far before noticing the ubiquity of popular written and pictorial versions of the narrative of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* on bookmarks, greeting cards, candle vases in supermarket stores, and on city street wall murals. This narrative tells the story of a Mexican peasant, Juan Diego, who had a vision of the Virgin Mary at Mount Tepeyac, near Mexico City in the year 1531. The following excerpt, taken from the legend of a greeting card, represents one of many popular versions:

Ten years after the bloody Spanish conquest of Mexico, the Mother of God appeared to an Aztec craftsman named Juan Diego. She appeared as an Aztec herself and addressed him in Nahuatl, the Aztec tongue, in a manner one would address a prince. She appeared several miles outside of Mexico City, which had become the center of Spanish power; she insisted, however, that a shrine in her honor be built on that spot among the conquered people. She sent Juan Diego back to the Spanish clergy to “evangelize” them—[the] ones who felt they already had all the truth. In each of these ways she restored dignity and hope to native people who had been dehumanized by foreign oppression. A shrine was built where Mary appeared, and Juan Diego spent the remaining 17 years of his life there, repeating her message of hope and liberation to all who would come. About eight million Native Americans became Christians in response to this message. (Lentz, 1987)

While the master story line remains constant across versions, there is, inevitably, elaboration of details. Indeed, in *doctrina* classes, teachers craft particular renditions of the narrative emphasizing certain events. The message, however, is perennial; a Mexican Indian (and therefore, Mexico, the place of the apparition) was chosen as the recipient of an important message. Versions of the narrative are based

on two relatively unknown written sources, one in Nahuatl and the other in Spanish, which date back to the 16th century (Rodriguez, 1994 and sources therein). Poole (1995) has most vigorously challenged the historical origins of the narrative concluding that manipulations of the narrative have served at various points in time to politically define and redefine Mexican identity. Indeed, *doctrina* narrative practices support his conclusion. Neither the Nahuatl nor the Spanish written text versions are mentioned during *doctrina* instruction; instead, a particular local version emerges from collaborative narrative activity.

## LANGUAGE SOCIALIZATION IN RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

In its broadest sense, socialization is the process of becoming a competent member of society, of internalizing the norms, role expectations, and values of the community; in sum, of becoming culturally competent (Bernstein, 1970; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Within this paradigm, language socialization constitutes socialization through language and socialization to use language (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). In this paper I concentrate on the discourse and interaction of teachers and students during religious instruction, and on the process of socialization in *doctrina* classes.

As some anthropologists have noted, a child's first exposure to literacy and other formal uses of his or her language can take place in churches. Heath (1983) described church literacy practices in the Piedmont Carolinas where interactions at church mirrored those of the home, reinforcing socialization practices learned in the home. Ethnographic research in Western Samoa has shown how Bible lessons socialize children not only to formal registers of Samoan, but also to the English language and American cultural norms (Duranti, 1994; Ochs, 1986; Duranti & Ochs, 1986). In turn, immigrant Samoan groups in the United States find the institution of the church to be an important link to their culture. Indeed, the teaching of the Samoan alphabet and numbers in a Samoan-American Sunday school in Southern California constitutes a nexus of cultural networks beyond the home and the church (Duranti, Ochs, & Ta'ase, 1995). The church in these immigrant situations is a powerful agent in the maintenance of the community's world views and language. As in the Samoan case, *doctrina* is a culturally significant space where both language and religious instruction take place. Through narrative activity enacted around the telling of the narrative of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*, teachers link their students' present experiences to the experiences evoked in the narrative.

### Language Socialization at Doctrina

Early records of *doctrina* instruction date back to the Spanish conquest. In colonial Mexico, *doctrina* classes were offered daily and were conducted in the native languages. Indeed, students were so numerous that the term "*doctrina*" was also used to describe entire towns of newly converted indigenous groups<sup>2</sup>. An ethnography of the town of Mexquitic in Central Mexico notes that in the year 1680,



the number of converts was so large that a visiting bishop felt the need to declare Castillian Spanish the language of *doctrina* instruction to enforce the use of the colonizers' language. This decision, however, extended the use of Spanish to other aspects of public life in the town, concatenating linguistic and religious conversion (Frye, 1996). This move towards religious and linguistic uniformity was soon politically reinforced, and by the year 1770, a Spanish royal decree instituted the teaching of Castillian in Mexico, with the eventual goal of eliminating the native languages (Suárez, 1983). As this bit of historical background suggests, religious instruction is part of an institution which has socialized children not only to religious tenets but to dominant languages as well.

### Religious Instruction at St. Paul's

In Southern California, Catholic parishes with a large Spanish-speaking Latino membership often hold *doctrina* and religious services in Spanish. At St. Paul's Catholic church, *doctrina* classes were first offered in 1979 as a parallel to religious instruction classes offered in English, called catechism. The use of Spanish by the Latino membership of the St. Paul's parish is best explained in the words of a bilingual Latina parishioner, who, upon being asked her choice of language for religious practice categorically stated: "I talk to God in the language of the heart." For her and others in this parish, that language is Spanish. And while these Latinos reside in a state where English is the official language of the public sphere<sup>3</sup> children in *doctrina* are being socialized to use Spanish for what is close to the heart: for them, religious practice. Ironically, this situation illustrates the achieved goal of colonial Spanish friars, as today in this Los Angeles parish, in what constitutes a former Spanish colony, Spanish is the local indigenous language that now needs to be eradicated.

In April 1996, amid much local debate, the parish council at St. Paul's voted to eliminate *doctrina*. The major concern expressed by the leaders of this predominantly English-speaking parish was that *doctrina* and other Spanish-speaking activities fostered an image of separate parishes within what should be perceived as a single religious unit. Yet, when interviewed regarding this proposed change, both English- and Spanish-speaking parishioners often cited poor race relations as the main reason behind the decision to eliminate *doctrina*. During these interviews, parishioners expressed varying degrees of intolerance towards the religious practices of the Spanish-speaking group. A catechism teacher, whose class will be discussed in later section of this paper, stated that Latinos were "too superstitious." Given the current race relations and conflicting perceptions of religious practice at St. Paul's, which reflect a generalized movement against multilingualism in the state of California, it comes as no surprise that English is being instituted as the language of instruction. The 1680 *doctrina* mandate of the Mexquitic town, which replaced Nahuatl with Spanish, is echoed 316 years later in the parish of St. Paul's decision to eliminate Spanish as the language of instruction in *doctrina* in favor of English.

Religious instruction classes at St. Paul's take place on Saturday mornings during the academic year in the classrooms of the St. Paul's Elementary School, the parish's private school located across the street from the main church building. Approximately 150 children participate in these religious education classes. Perhaps the most salient difference between *doctrina* and catechism can be summarized in the following terms: Whereas *doctrina* instructional policies seem to be more locally managed and community-oriented, often blending religious and cultural practice, the catechism curriculum follows a uniform format adhered to by parishes throughout the United States which concentrates on the teaching of Catholic precepts.

### Doctrina

Student ages at *doctrina* range from 6-15. Most students come from working class families and attend public schools, as few can afford the costly monthly fees of the St. Paul's Elementary school<sup>4</sup>. *Doctrina* children are bilingual speakers of Spanish and English, and only a few seem to be more competent in English. Most are recent immigrants from Mexico, with only a few of them being U.S.-born Latinos. The *doctrina* teachers, all of Mexican descent, tend to be monolingual Spanish speakers and long-time residents of Los Angeles. At *doctrina*, all interaction is carried out in Spanish, including the religious services associated with religious instructional activities.<sup>5</sup>

### Catechism

English catechism classes meet an hour before *doctrina* classes begin, so that by the time *doctrina* students arrive, the catechism children have left, making the interaction between these two groups of children very limited. The children enrolled in catechism represent a variety of different ethnic backgrounds, including Latino, Asian-American, and European American. While it might seem surprising to find Latinos in the English catechism classes, these children are often second- and third-generation immigrants from Mexico and South America who are more proficient in English than Spanish.

The children's ages in catechism range from 6-9 constituting a considerably younger student population than that of *doctrina*. Because Catholic children who are enrolled in parochial schools must also receive religious instruction at their local parishes, many children who attend other parish schools attend St. Paul's Saturday instruction. In general, children in catechism come from a slightly higher socio-economic level. The two catechism teachers at the time of the study were European American and conducted their classes entirely in English.

### DATA BASE

Data for this paper are drawn from a corpus of video and audio recordings of *doctrina* and catechism classes, interviews, field notes, and on-going conversa-

tions with teachers, parents, and children collected over the span of twenty months of participant-observation, from September 1994 to May 1996. The *doctrina* class described here is composed of 42 students. Teresa, the teacher of the class, is a monolingual, Spanish-speaking woman who immigrated in her early twenties to the United States, and has lived in Los Angeles for over thirty years. The study also draws on one catechism class composed of 15 students. The catechism teacher, Nancy, is a monolingual, English-speaking woman in her late forties. She is a native of Los Angeles. The *doctrina* segments discussed in the next few paragraphs include transcribed<sup>6</sup> excerpts from the telling of the narrative of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* in Teresa's *doctrina* class and illustrate how her class collaboratively constructs the identities of dark-skinned Mexicans with a history of oppression. In contrast, the catechism excerpt presented here is part of a lesson on the multiple apparitions of the Virgin Mary and illustrates a different ideology about Our Lady of Guadalupe<sup>7</sup> and ethnicity in general.

### CONSTRUCTING SOCIAL IDENTITIES THROUGH *DOCTRINA* NARRATIVES

As previously noted, narratives are collaboratively told and socially organized. As such, in the course of telling a narrative version, participants take socially relevant roles as teller and listener. At *doctrina*, this activity is also highly affiliative. But the most significant characteristic of the telling of the narrative of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* is that it serves as a locus of identity construction. Classroom interaction draws children into crafting narrative renditions of the apparition of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* which encourage identification with the place of the apparition and the Virgin Mary. These classroom narratives describe the sociohistorical setting of colonial Mexico as a setting of past oppressive experience, which might reflect *doctrina* children's lives as ethnic minorities in the United States. The narration of events often spawns a great deal of questions about the students' lives. Similar to "whole language" approaches to literacy which are used in other formal classrooms, Teresa's teaching style contextualizes the narrative being presented, breaking it down into more manageable parts. She stops frequently in the course of telling the narrative to directly relate the experiences being described to those of the students in the class. This link is created both at the interactional level (through pauses, questions, and repetitions) and at the grammatical level (through predication and the temporal dynamics of tense and aspect).

#### The Narrative Construction of Mexican Identity

Example (1) below illustrates how Teresa and her *doctrina* class collaboratively construct a Mexican identity. As Teresa begins to recount the events of the story, she first situates these events as taking place in colonial Mexico. She does this by stopping the narration, and through questions, determining how many of her students are from Mexico, the setting of the ongoing narrative. In this way, she in-



cludes her students from Mexico as part of the narrative in progress, making the telling relevant to the students' present lives. This also constitutes a highly affiliative activity, and as we will see, students who were not born in Mexico can claim participation in this collective identity through their parents' heritage:

Example (1)

Teresa:      ↑**Hace (.) muchos años que se apareció**  
has been many years that REFX appear-PAST-3Sg  
Many years ago appeared

(0.8)

**la Santísima Virgen de Guadalupe**  
the Blessed Virgin of Guadalupe

**en el cerro (0.2) del Tepeyac,**  
in the mount of Tepeyac  
at mount Tepeyac

(0.2)

**en la capital de México.**  
*in the capital of Mexico*

(0.8)

>**Quiénes son de México.**  
how many be-PRES-Pl from Mexico  
*who is from Mexico*

Class:                    ((raises hands))

Teresa:      **Los demás son de aquí**  
the rest be-PRES-Pl from here  
*the rest are from here*

(1.0)

Class:      **Sí:**  
*yes*

Teresa:      **[Quiénes somos de México**  
how many be-1Pl from Mexico  
*how many of us are from Mexico*

Carlos:      **Mis pa- mi madres      son      de México,**  
                  my pa- my mothers      be-3Pl      from Mexico  
                  *my fa-my mothers are from Mexico*

Teresa:      **A-Oh ↑sí**  
                  *oh yes*

(0.8)

**Bueno. bajen      la      manita**  
                  good      low-CMD      the      hand-DIM  
                  *good lower your little hand*

As Teresa begins to tell the events of the narrative, she establishes a link from the place where the Virgin Mary appeared, *la capital de México* ("the capital of Mexico"), to present times by relating the setting to the students' place of birth. In her question *Quiénes son de México* ("who is from Mexico") she asks her Mexican students to publicly identify as Mexicans couching this affiliative interaction in present tense, in the here and now. The first time a collectivity is invoked in this class, it describes two contrasting groups: those *de México* ("from Mexico") and those who are not—those *de aquí* ("from here") understood as from the United States.

Teresa's second invocation of a collective identity as Mexican is found in the utterance *Quiénes son de México*, which now includes her, aligning with those students who first identified as *de México* ("from Mexico"). In her question *Quiénes somos de México* ("how many of us are from Mexico") Teresa uses a form of the verb to be, *somos* ("we are" the first person plural form), which in its inclusive form indexes a collective identity as Mexican. Such is the affiliative force of Teresa's question that Carlos, a student presumably *de aquí* ("from here"), states that his parents *son de México* ("are from Mexico"). Students like Carlos, whose parents come from Mexico (though we assume that he himself does not) are included in the evolving "we" as illustrated by Teresa's affirmative response *A-Oh ↑sí* ("Oh yes").

Narrative activity at *doctrina*, thus socializes children to identify as Mexican. Through questions about the students' place of birth, a group of Mexicans and a group *de aquí* ("from here") are identified. Though Teresa begins a classroom rendition by narrating the past, the *then* of the story, locating the place where the Virgin Mary appeared in Mexico, she then switches to the moment of the telling to collaboratively redefine the setting of the story in relation to the present participants. Thus the narrative is not only about the apparition of the Virgin Mary in the Mexico of many years ago, it is also a narrative about the Mexican students in this *doctrina* class as they have been made an integral part of the story.

## The Narrative Construction of Oppression

As Teresa continues to orchestrate a particular classroom narrative rendition, a history of oppression in colonial times is discursively constructed. Having identified as Mexicans, this class now collectively recounts its own colonial history. In Example (2), through temporal dynamics available in Spanish, in particular, through the use of the imperfective (IMPF) aspect, Teresa guides her class through an historical revisitation of the social landscape of colonial Mexico as she describes in more detail the setting at the time of the apparition of the Virgin Mary.

As a language that encodes tense and aspect morphologically, the imperfect in Spanish is realized in suffixation in the forms *-ía-*, *-aba*. The imperfective portrays actions as viewed from within and in progress, and stands in contrast to the perfective usually encoded in past tense, which denotes actions as completed, viewing a situation from the outside (Comrie, 1976). The choice of imperfective is thus a particularly effective resource which allows for a more vivid<sup>8</sup> and highly affiliative use of language to describe the setting of the story, a setting depicting a series of oppressive acts carried out by Spanish conquistadores which warranted intervention (as is often the case in postcolonial histories; see Chatterjee, 1993). The following example illustrates the imperfective as the vehicle through which the class travels the oppressive landscape of Sixteenth Century Mexico; a journey that stops abruptly with a contrasting switch to past tense to explain that the entire situation, the panorama of oppression which the class has now “witnessed,” was untenable:

### Example (2)

Teresa:       **Entonces este<sup>9</sup> (1.2)**  
                   *then*

**fíjense           bien lo que les       voy       a decir**  
 Attend-CMD well it that to you go-FUT to say-INF  
*pay attention to what I'm going to say to you*

(1.2)

**cuando (0.5) en México había       mucha opresión, (.)**  
 when           in Mexico be-IMPF-Sg much oppression  
*when in Mexico there was a lot of oppression*

**por los españoles**  
 by the Spaniards  
*by the Spaniards*

(1.5)

**que a-oprimían mucho al indígena.**  
 who oppress-IMPF-Pl much to+the indian  
*who oppressed the Indians a lot*

(1.5)

**Y entonces e:ran (.) muy católicos**  
 and then be-IMPF-Pl very catholic  
 and they were very catholic

**>porque bueno porque nos dejaban muchas iglesias<**  
 because well because to us leave-IMPF-Pl many churches  
*because well because they left us many churches*

**en todo el país de México**  
*in all the country of Mexico*

(0.5)

**(es que) también este (0.5)**  
 is that too  
*it's that too*

**querían. tener. sometidos, (.8) a (.) a la gente más pobre**  
 want-IMPF-PL have-INF subjugated to the people more poor  
*they [Spaniards] wanted to have subjugated the poorest people*

**o l-la trabajaban mu:cho verdad,**  
 or work-IMPF-Pl much right  
*or they worked them hard, right*

**>pues ellos que querían más<sup>10</sup>**  
 well they that want-IMPF-PL more  
*well they wanted more*

**que (.) los indígenas**  
 that the indians  
*than the Indians*

(0.8)

**ése no (.) le pareció a la Virgen**  
 that no seem-PAST-Sg to the virgin  
*that didn't seem [right] to the Virgin*

First note that the orientation to the story, the detailed description of the setting is conveyed exclusively using the imperfective:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• en México <b>había</b> opresión</li> <li>• los españoles <b>oprimían</b></li> <li>• <b>eran</b> católicos</li> <li>• nos <b>dejaban</b> muchas iglesias</li> <li>• <b>querían</b> tener sometidos</li> <li>• la <b>trabajaban</b> mucho</li> <li>• ellos <b>querían</b> más</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in Mexico there was(IMPF) oppresion</li> <li>• the Spaniards oppressed(IMPF)</li> <li>• (they) were(IMPF) Catholic</li> <li>• they left(IMPF) us many churches</li> <li>• They wanted(IMPF) to have subjugated</li> <li>• (they) worked(IMPF) (the people) hard</li> <li>• they wanted(IMPF) more</li> </ul>
---	---

Precisely at the end of this description, a switch to past tense, in *esto no le pareció a la Virgen* (“this didn’t seem [right] to the Virgin”) summarizes the previous description (indicated in *esto* “this”) indicating a switch in action, the Virgin Mary’s intervention. The grammatical resources in this narrative telling, including the use of the imperfective to access knowledge about the past, makes the description of Mexico’s colonial setting not only more more vivid but more affiliative. The unfolding of the oppressive events which describe the indigenous Mexicans as oppressed, subjugated, and overworked, immediately after this class has publicly identified as Mexican, is a powerful means for affiliating with that past.

The oppressive acts embedded in the setting of the story are so consequential in the making of this story of redemption that the teacher quizzes her students at the end of the class period precisely on those acts which motivated the Virgin Mary’s appearance in Mexico. In Example (3) below, the socio-economic inequality of colonial Mexico is emphasized again, this time co-narrated by the teacher and a student named Enrique:

#### Example (3)

Teresa: **Y por qué se quiso aparecer la Virgen en México**  
and why REFX want-PAST-3Sg appear-INF the virgin in Mexico  
*and why did the Virgin want to appear in Mexico*

Enrique: **Para cuidar a México↑**  
To take care-INF of Mexico  
*to take care of Mexico*

(0.5 )

Teresa: **Claro. para rescatar a los (0.5) indígenas**  
of course to rescue-INF to the indians  
*Of course, to rescue the Indians*



de la opresión de los españoles.  
 from the oppression of the Spaniards  
 from Spanish oppression.

In response to Teresa's question about the reason for the Virgin Mary's apparition in Mexico, Enrique answers that she appeared in Mexico to take care of the country; a response which Teresa accepts with *claro* ("of course") reformulating it from *para cuidar a México* ("to take care of Mexico") into *para rescatar a los indígenas* ("to take care of the Indians"). She further elaborates on Enrique's response, indicating that the Indians needed to be rescued from Spanish oppression. Recall that Teresa's class' journey to Mexico's past is a journey to a past that is now shared by the Mexicans in her class; one which has described two groups of people, the Spaniards and the Indians as actors from an unequal past. This interaction between Teresa and Enrique emphasizes one distinguishing aspect of this class' narrative: that the Virgin Mary chose to appear in Mexico not only to take care of Mexico, but also because the Indians needed to be liberated from Spanish oppression. But what is also interesting to note, is that these *doctrina* members have thus far identified as Mexican in the present (recall that Teresa asks students to publicly identify as Mexican) and as Indian in terms of a collaboratively constructed reference to an oppressive past. This blurred distinction between a Mexican present and an Indian past is emphasized again in the course of the narrative, as the class creates an identity as dark-skinned people.

### The Narrative Construction of Skin Color

As Teresa continues to narrate the story of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*, she describes the color of the Virgin Mary's skin establishing two skin colors representative of two groups of people. Example (4) below illustrates how a switch from the narrated past to the moment of the telling creates yet another collective identity for this class, this time making reference to skin color. Since current discussion in the social sciences has been problematizing the boundaries between ethnic and racial identity (Hollinger, 1995, Omi & Winant, 1993; Waters, 1990), it is particularly revealing to see how at *doctrina* ethnic identity is based on skin color. In the example below, Teresa explains to her class the physical features of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* as similar to their own:

#### Example (4)

Teresa:      **la Santísima Virgen** quiso                      ser (.) se  
                  the blessed    virgin want-PAST-3Sg be-INF REF  
                  *The Blessed Virgin wanted to be*

**parecerse                      morenita    como nosotros.**  
 look-INF-REFX dark-DIM like    Pro-1Pl  
*to look a little dark like us*

(1.0)

porque la Virgen, (.) de Guadalupe  
 because the Virgin of Guadalupe  
*because the Virgin of Guadalupe*

no es blanca como (.) la Virgen del Carmen  
 no is white like the Virgin of Carmen  
*is not white like the Virgin of Carmen*

que se apareció (.)  
 who REFX appear-PAST-3Sg  
*who appeared*

y es la patrona de España,  
 and is the patroness of Spain  
*and is the patronness of Spain*

la Virgen del Carmen es blanca.  
 the Virgin of Carmen is white  
*the Virgin of Carmen is white*

(0.5)

y la Virgen de Guadalupe  
 and the Virgin of Guadalupe  
*and the Virgin of Guadalupe*

es morenita como nosotros  
 is dark-DIM like Pro-1Pl  
*is a little dark like us*

In this example, a particular shade of skin color, *morenita* ("a little dark"), is identified as the defining feature of the Virgin of Guadalupe, and the predicate construction *como nosotros* ("like us") embraces the *doctrina* class in a collectivity of dark-skinned peoples. By switching to the moment of the telling, the narration of past events and the description of the narrative's characters includes the dark-skinned *doctrina* people of the present. As the example illustrates, the Virgin of Guadalupe was/is (yesterday/today) dark like the people at *doctrina*.

It is also interesting to note that in this display of ethnic awareness with skin color as the most salient element of contrast, the Virgin of Guadalupe and the Virgin of Carmen co-exist in the present, that is, at the moment of the telling. Notice too that Teresa emphasizes that the Virgin of Guadalupe is not white like the Virgin of Carmen, implying that the Mexican children who look like the Virgin of Guadalupe are not white either. The description and emphasis through repetition, that the Virgin of Guadalupe is *morenita como nosotros* ("a little dark like

us”), is indexical of the class of dark Mexicans, and, by extension, the oppressed dark Indians of the past. By disaffiliating her class from the white Virgin of Carmen, Teresa disaffiliates her class from the oppressor Spaniards of colonial Mexico who share the white Virgin’s skin color, while at the same time, recognizing and claiming a dark skin color for her class.

This particular *doctrina* narrative telling is an example of how variation in narrative details respond to the recipient organization and the goals of the narrative activity. Clearly, Teresa keeps the main story line, compared, for example, to the plot depicted in the greeting card example I presented before, yet she elaborates on the setting and the skin color of the Virgin Mary. As Poole (1995) has noted, the narrative has served as a means for creating a Mexican identity. Through the continuous unfolding of the narrative, Teresa and her students represent their multiple identities in temporal blends: In the past, they were dark-skinned oppressed Indians in Mexico; they are now dark-skinned Mexicans; and they can also be people *de aquí* (“from here”). This tracing of identities along a temporal and spatial continuum illustrates the diasporic potential of narrative as it creates and explains life in the “borderlands” (Anzaldúa, 1987). *Doctrina* members are linked to Mexico through place, as the birth-place of the majority of the students; they are also linked to Mexico in time, as Indians of the past; and they are also people from here (be it the United States, Los Angeles, or the parish) *both* in time and place. The narrative renditions of the apparition of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* are thus sites where *doctrina* children are socialized to Mexican identity.

### MULTI-ETHNIC MARY

As the parish of St. Paul’s moves towards its own “English Only” policy, Latino children will probably join children in other religious instruction classes in which English is the medium of instruction. The effect this multiracial environment will have on *doctrina* students’ experiences and on the collaborative telling of particular versions of the narrative of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* remains to be assessed. As I have indicated before, English catechism classes at St. Paul’s are racially diverse. On the day the classroom interaction described here was recorded, there were Latino, Asian, and Caucasian students present. A segment of classroom interaction depicted in Example (5) below, illustrates two distinct phenomena. First, the dynamics of tense and aspect are used differently, especially distinct from the *doctrina* class examples presented above. Second, Mexican ethnicity is positioned as one of many ethnicities representative of a generic model of American society. In Example (5), Nancy, the teacher, explains to her catechism class the many apparitions of the Virgin Mary:

## Example (5)

- Nancy: Now. (0.2) remember that Mary has appeared (0.2) in many many countries (.) to many many people, (0.5) differently. (0.2) Our Lady of Guadalupe she appeared to the Indian. she looked like an Indian. °hh when she appeared over [he:re] [((walking towards cast statue on desk)) (1.5) uh (0.5) Our Lady of Grace (0.8) [this is Our Lady of Grace [((touching statue)) (0.5) she's crushing the snake, (0.5) with her ↑feet (0.5) cause the snake represents the ↑Devil (0.5) and she's standing on top of the world, this is (.) Our Lady of Grace. (0.5) We have (0.5) uh (0.2) Our Lady of Mount Carmel. We saw<sup>11</sup> the Pilgrim Virgin, (0.2) Our Lady of Fatima:, (0.5) She has appeared (.) to many many many many places. (0.2) She's appeared in Lourdes. (.) and when she was in ↑Lourdes, she wore the costume of the French ladies, (.) she looked like a French lady. (0.2) when she appears in Japa:n, (.) she appears (0.2) Japa↑nese (0.5) When she appears in Hawai*i*: (0.2) if she does. she'd appears Hawai*ian*, (0.5) So Our Lady can (.) can change her (0.5) features, (.) to look like (.) the country that she is appearing in.

Let's consider first the temporal organization of this list. Present perfect is initially used to state that the Virgin Mary has appeared to several people in the past, in Nancy's words: *Mary has appeared in many many countries to many many people*. Nancy's first example of the Virgin Mary's apparition is Our Lady of Guadalupe who *appeared* (past tense) to the Indian. In all cases in which the place

(and manner) of apparition is mentioned, the past tense is used (*looked like an Indian; she wore the costume; she looked like a French lady*). Present tense variants are used to describe the different apparitions of the Virgin Mary, portraying what seem to be generic manifestations. This stands in contrast to the particularization observed in the *doctrina* narrative rendition, where the telling of the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe is embedded in a unique historical moment. Moreover, the emphasis in this catechism class seems to be on describing a generic, multi-ethnic Mary, which contrasts with the emphasis of the *doctrina* narrative discussed before to create a Mexican identity and describe Spanish oppression in colonial Mexico. While Nancy notes Mary's apparitions without making reference to specific historical contexts, in fact, this generic portrayal leaves the possibility open for a future apparition in Hawaii, she does make sure that the list recognizes many ethnicities, including Mexican, French, and Japanese. This teacher's teaching style<sup>12</sup> is certainly inclusive, yet it denies a particular historicity and the opportunity to organize and explain past and present experience of particular ethnic groups in the class. Moreover, Nancy's recitational style does not encourage participation from the students in her class.

Even though the two classes described in this paper cannot be compared in terms of the actual telling of the narrative, there is one important difference in the way in which both teachers make reference and assign meaning to Our Lady of Guadalupe. Whereas the narrative of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* promotes affiliative activities and creates a unique Latino identity, a collective self and history, in Nancy's catechism class, Our Lady of Guadalupe is mentioned ahistorically as part of a list that becomes a representative sample of the multi-ethnic composition of the class and of society at large. Given the changes in language policy at St. Paul's, the *doctrina* children of the parish will be joining catechism classes, like Nancy's, where the opportunities to create a collective identity as Mexican are limited and where homogenizing and generic discourses pervade.

## IMPLICATIONS

*Doctrina* teachers design collaborative narrative activities that socialize children to acquire and display knowledge of a collective class version of the narrative of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*. That is, creating a collective version of the narrative not only promotes recall of information, it legitimizes the experiences of the *then* and *now*—both the experiences narrated in the story and those which include the teacher's and students' present lives. The study of the language socialization practices of this church community sheds explanatory light on the ways in which language is a potent way to either constitute or minimize identities. We have seen how a *doctrina* teacher orchestrates an oral collaborative rendition of the narrative of the apparition of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* to socialize children to a range of social identities. We have also seen how a catechism teacher positions ethnic identities as part of a representative list.



The analysis of the practices of the doctrina community described in this article has implications for understanding the complexity of the social worlds in which the children of this community live, especially as school-aged minority children. Meaning-making in this Latino learning context is carried out differently. At *doctrina* children acquire and learn to verbally display socio-historical knowledge that is affiliative and which they share with their classmates and teachers. The language socialization practices of *doctrina* linguistically and interactionally reaffirm membership in a particular Latino community, linking children to the world views of their community. Yet these practices will become difficult to enact given the parish's mandate to use English as the medium of instruction. The practices at *doctrina* are examples of the ways in which a community not only retells its past, it affirms and claims social identities while gradually being relegated to the linguistic and cultural margins of a local parish in Los Angeles.

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### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> All names have been changed.

<sup>2</sup> *VOX Diccionario Manual Ilustrado de la Lengua Española*, 8th edition. Calabria, Barcelona: Biblograf. See also Frye, 1996 for a brief description of early colonial religious practices and life in Mexico.

<sup>3</sup> Certain states, including California, have legally adopted "English Only" policies that restrict the use of languages other than English in public places such as the workplace and government offices.

<sup>4</sup> For the academic year of 1995-96, tuition was \$200.00 per month, not including books and other school supplies.

<sup>5</sup> Most notably, First Communion preparation culminates with a celebratory religious service at the main church building.

<sup>6</sup> Transcription symbols used in this paper: ↑ Indicates sharp rising intonation; a period at the end of words marks falling intonation; > indicates speech faster than normal cadence; underlining represent sounds pronounced with emphasis; colons indicate elongated sounds; "•hh" indicates inhalations; numbers in parentheses indicate time elapsed in tenths of seconds, with periods indicating micropauses or noticeable pauses that are less than two tenths of a second; brackets indicate overlapping speech; information contained in ((double parentheses)) indicates nonverbal behavior; CMD is command verbal form; DIM is diminutive suffix, often encoding affect; REFX is a reflexive pronoun; Sg denotes singular; Pl denotes plural; INF is the infinitive tense; IMPF is the imperfective (in Spanish both tense and aspect).

<sup>7</sup> I will be using the English name of Our Lady of Guadalupe when describing the catechism class.

<sup>8</sup> Silva-Corvalán (1983) has noted that certain Spanish tenses, in particular the historical present (HP), provide "vividness" and act as evaluative device. This same argument has been made for the HP in English by Schiffrin (1981). Here I extend Silva-Corvalán's claim to include the Spanish imperfective as functioning both as an evaluative and affiliative device.

<sup>9</sup> Similar to American English "uhm."

<sup>10</sup> From context it is understood that the Spaniards wanted more material goods than did the Indians.

<sup>11</sup> On an earlier trip to the temple that morning, the class met a woman carrying the statue of the Pilgrim Virgin.

<sup>12</sup> It remains unknown whether Nancy's choice of examples and descriptive attributes of the different Virgin Marys reflect more than instructional ideology; that is, whether the examples reflect personal and community attitudes towards different cultural groups.

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# Heteroglossia and the Construction of Asian American Identities

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*This article examines the interactive deployment of code-switching in a conversation between a Chinese American man, a Korean American man, and an African American man. By drawing upon their heteroglossic repertoires of a vulgar register of Korean, English inflected with African American Vernacular English, and formal English, the participants index specific ethnic identities for themselves and for each other while collaboratively constructing the identity of a girl. Yet because a single act of language can have both affiliative and disaffiliative ramifications and because participants' ideologies about even individual words can vary, the indexical meaning of the code-switching is not always shared. This article thus argues that any analysis of code-switching must take into account the local constitution of identities and ideologies as well as the multivocalic nature of language.*

The study of ethnic identities as expressed through language has traditionally focused on two main fronts: describing the linguistic features which characterize distinctive ethnic dialects and determining the social and situational motivations for code-switching. Much of this work on in-group and out-group talk has been predicated on the notion of unitary, homogenous, and in some sense, linguistically isolated ethnic speech communities (Pratt, 1987). Yet the density of modern urban life, where individuals from different and overlapping speech communities come increasingly into contact, problematizes this notion of a single, fixed ethnic identity. As individuals become socialized into different ethnic groups throughout their lifespan, they participate in multiple, multilayered communities, creating a heteroglossic repertoire of identities from which to draw on (Kroskrity, 1993). In this context, ethnic identity is fluid and contingent; in Moerman's (1988) terms "situated, motile, shaded, purposive, consequential, negotiated" (p. 90).

This portrait of ethnicity as a dynamic, subjective *choice* (Lyman & Douglass, 1973; Waters, 1990) is not, however, without its constraints. Situational ethnicity is dialogically constituted in relation to ascriptions of identity from others while at the same time mediated by cultural notions of race and biological determinism. The invocation of ethnic identity in interaction cannot be unilateral, but is subject to and contingent upon both ratification and resistance from others in the interaction.

In this world of ethnic fluidity, language plays a special role. For when ethnicity becomes, as Mary Waters (1990) writes "a subjective identity, invoked at will by the individual," no vehicle other than language is as ideally suited for signaling the



rapid shifts in ethnic identification. These shifts can be accomplished through what Gumperz (1982) has termed “contextualization cues,” features of phonology, grammar, lexicon, or language choice which index specific social meanings.

In this article, I investigate how these shifts in ethnic identity are constituted through the interactional deployment of code-switching within the Asian American community. Based on a close analysis of a conversation between a Chinese American man, a Korean American man, and an African American man, I explore how the act of codeswitching into an interlocutor’s language is situated within an interactional matrix. Taking as my starting point the idea that language is a *resource* for doing particular social identities and that those identities are not fixed or pre-given (Ochs, 1993), I demonstrate how the participants index specific ethnic identities for themselves and for each other while collaboratively constructing the identity of a girl. At each step of the interaction, multiple ethnic identities are invoked, and are subject to contestation by others.

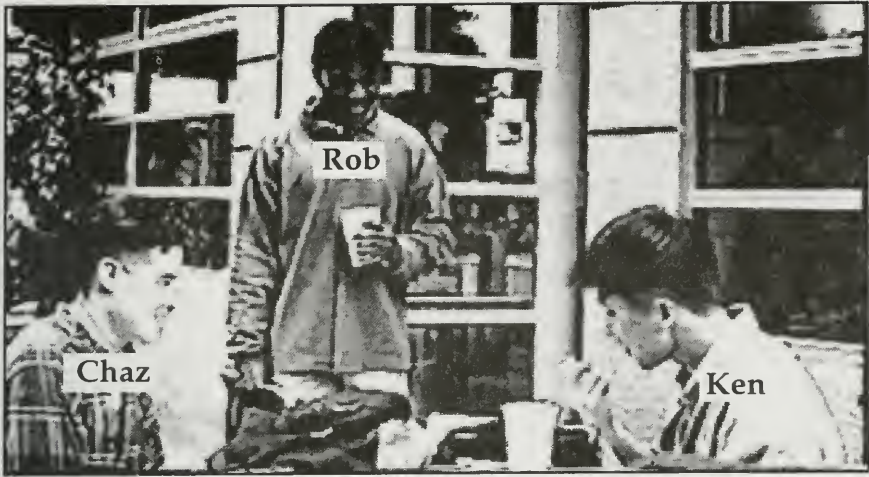
In particular, I examine how the heteroglossia of language (Bakhtin, [1935] 1981) affects this constitution of identities. Through a complex practice of code-switching between English inflected with African American Vernacular English, a formal register of English, and a vulgar register of Korean, the participants index a multiplicity of stances and identities. Yet because any act of language can have multiple interpretations, the meaning of a particular act of language is not always self-evident. As Gumperz has shown, this ambiguity is particularly salient in interethnic contact, where presuppositions of indexical meaning may not be shared. By displaying how the participants themselves orient to different interpretations of the ‘same’ act of language and indeed, of specific individual words, this paper argues that any analysis of code-switching must be sensitive to the multivocalic meanings of language.

PARTICIPANT ORGANIZATION

The conversation which forms the basis for this paper was videotaped in 1995 in Los Angeles in a community where interethnic communication is frequent. The participants are Chaz, a 23 year-old Chinese American, Ken, a 23 year-old Korean American, and Rob, a 25 year-old African American.

Table 1: Relative Language Abilities

LANGUAGE	CHAZ	KEN
English	native	good
Korean	good	native
Japanese	minimal	good
Chinese	good	--



**Figure 1: The Conversation Participants**

Both Chaz and Ken are multilingual in variety of Asian languages. Although Chaz is Chinese American and was born in the US after his parents emigrated from Taiwan, he was an active participant in second-generation Korean American culture at the time this conversation was filmed. He learned to speak Korean by interacting with a peer group of second-generation Korean American men who socialized in the extensive network of Korean restaurants, bars, nightclubs, pool halls, and karaoke clubs located in the ethnic enclave of Koreatown. Chaz then studied Korean for a year in college and took an Asian American studies course on the Korean American experience. He also studied Chinese for two years, and Japanese for a quarter.

Ken self-identifies as a member of the 1.5 generation—Koreans who enter the US during puberty or adolescence. He was born in Korea and immigrated to California with his family when he was sixteen. He usually speaks Korean with his friends, including Chaz, and his grasp of rapid conversational English is at times shaky. After graduating from high school, he lived with his aunt and uncle who are ethnic Koreans but often speak Japanese at home because they were both educated in Japan, worked there as missionaries, and have many Japanese speaking friends. Ken then studied Japanese for two years in college and ranks his Japanese ability as roughly equal to his English speaking ability.

Because the bulk of this segment involves interaction between Chaz and Ken, I will not detail Rob's linguistic background. Chaz and Ken know each other as casual acquaintances; Chaz and Rob are better friends, and Rob and Ken meet only at the beginning of the conversation.

## INITIAL POSITIONINGS

The specific segment I will be analyzing in this article concerns a girl Chaz finds attractive. At first she is described in overwhelmingly positive terms, which leads Ken to ask whether she is Chinese. She is not, and her ethnicity is co-constructed as a trouble source.<sup>1</sup>

- 1 Rob: **it would be coo-**  
 2 I mean I guess bein married would be cool  
 3 but [findin that girl is  
 4 [ (( Rob horizontal headshake))  
 5 (1.0)  
 6 (( Rob horizontal headshakes, turns to Ken))  
 7 ((Ken vertical headshakes))  
 8 Rob: [**(I get) ]**  
 9 [((Chaz two-handed point to Rob))  
 10 Chaz: [**there's this one [girl**  
 11 [((Chaz's gaze reaches Ken))  
 12 [((hands come up))  
 13 [**that's so f:↑LY:::::ri'now[ohmi[god.[she is**  
 14 [((moving in)) [((head bounce)) [((Ken & Rob mutual gaze))  
 15 Rob: [**gh [hah hah hah hah hah hah**  
 16 Ken: [**hah hah hah hah**  
 17 ((Chaz' palms hit table, pushes away from table, hits head on table))  
 18 Chaz: [**damn I am [do:wn. (.)**  
 19 [((palms move up and down)) [((palms hit table))  
 20 [**she's:::: she's::**  
 21 [((Chaz vertical headshakes, mouth curl, hands out palms down  
 22 marking beat, looks at Rob, then at camera, then at Ken))  
 23 (.2)  
 24 [((Chaz' gaze down to table.))  
 25 Chaz: [**she's [a:ll that**  
 26 [((Chaz hits table))  
 27 Ken : [**what(.) she's Chinese?**  
 28 Chaz: [**no. ((looking down))**  
 29 (.4)  
 30 Chaz: [**that's the [only ((hands moving alternately up and down above table))**  
 31 [(( point to Ken ))  
 32 [**that's the only one point of- of question.**  
 33 [((raises gaze to Ken ))  
 34 (.2)  
 35 Chaz: [**she's [not Chinese.**  
 36 [((Chaz eyebrow cock and simultaneous point to Ken ))  
 37 (.2)  
 38 Ken: (**w-**)  
 39 Chaz: [**If she was I'd fight off [everyone.**  
 40 [((Chaz' left hand sweeps from left to right))

- 41 I'd be like ((begin smile voice))  
 42 [[[Chaz' gaze reaches Rob]]]  
 43 [>ok, [you gotta boyfriend  
 44 [(((point to Rob)))  
 45 I'll [come over en kill 'im<  
 46 [(((Chaz' two fists bounce up))]  
 47 Rob: huh hah hah damn that's doin the (freedom thing)  
 48 [(((Chaz looking off to side))]  
 49 Chaz: [nah that's the that's the o:nly [thing (that's the only thing)

At first, in lines 10-25, the girl is constructed as extraordinarily attractive, through the affect, high pitch, and lengthening of the vowel on "f:↑LY::::::" (line 13), the embodied performance of overwhelmedness on line 17, the AAVE-inflected evaluative terms "down" (line 18) and "all that" (line 25); and the projected inarticulateness of lines 20-25, "She's:::::: She's:::::: (.2) she's all that."

Ken then makes a candidate identification of her ethnicity at line 27, "what she's Chinese?," a guess made relevant by earlier talk: In the segment directly preceding this one, Chaz explained that he wouldn't consider a job in show business because he wanted to marry a "nice girl. nice family and all that." He says:

cause my dad's like the oldest son right, of- and his dad is like the oldest son so like I'm his o:nly son. So like for me it's like it's really important to get that fa:mily thing going on.

Through these references to the importance of patrilineal succession, Chaz thus indexes his identity as a Chinese eldest son, with a duty to carry on the family line. Ken's utterance therefore seeks to take Chaz's perspective as to the most desirable ethnicity, constructing both Chaz and the girl in question as Chinese:

**Table 2: Ken: What (.) she's Chinese?**

language of utterance	English
construction of the girl	Chinese
construction of Chaz	Chinese
construction of Ken	Projects his understanding of Chaz's perspective on the most desirable ethnicity for the girl

However, she is not Chinese. Chaz shifts into an intellectually formalizing register in line 30, thereby distancing himself from her. Her ethnicity is the "only thing" wrong with her, the "only one point of question" which prevents him from pursuing her. Note that she is constructed as undatable because of this fatal flaw. If she were Chinese, Chaz would "fight off everyone" and indeed, kill her boy-

friend, to win her. But she is not and her ethnicity is therefore constituted as a trouble source.

**Table 3: Ethnicity Emerges as a Trouble Source**

KEN	CHAZ	IMPLICATIONS
	There's this one girl that's so f:LY::::::! Damn, I am down! she's she's all that	girl=extremely positive
What (.) she's Chinese?	that's the only one point of question....that's the only thing that's the only thing.	girl=not Chinese Her ethnicity is a trouble source

## POSITIONINGS WITHIN AN ASIAN AMERICAN SOCIAL ORDER

In this next section, Ken then asks whether she is Vietnamese. In seeking to understand the cultural implications of this next possible identification, it is important to recognize that being Vietnamese is not highly regarded in either Chinese or Korean cultures; in China, to be called Vietnamese is a slur, and in a series of interviews with Korean Americans in LA, my informants repeatedly characterized Vietnamese as “lower,” based upon a stratified Asian cultural hierarchy. One second-generation Korean American in her twenties described this hierarchy in the following way:

Chinese, Japanese, Korean up here  
*((hand making horizontal motions at chin level))*  
 Vietnamese, Cambodian, Filipino down here  
*((hand making horizontal motions at waist level))*

Several informants also told me that color plays a role in this hierarchy, as Southeast Asians are generally darker and smaller than East Asians. This positioning of East Asian superiority over Southeast Asia was echoed by another local second-generation Korean American woman:

If I had to marry anyone outside I guess number one would be Chinese [let me note that she might have said this because I had identified myself as ethnically Chinese], number two would be Japanese, and I mean, it'd be better for me to marry someone Jewish than to marry someone Vietnamese.



These cultural stereotypes of Vietnamese as “less civilized” were echoed in a survey of Korean American attitudes towards intermarriage conducted by Gin Yong Pang (1994) at Berkeley. She, too, found that when asked about their attitudes towards intermarriage, second and 1.5 generation Korean Americans preferred Japanese and Chinese Americans as marriage partners over whites, who were in turn preferred over Vietnamese or Filipino Americans. The low social and economic status of Vietnamese Americans was cited as one reason, while the East Asian/Southeast Asian divide was also relevant, according to one 21 year-old 1.5 generation Korean American:

I think there is this world view. Certain groups are higher. Let's say, according to the Western view [of evaluating the status of Asian countries], the Japanese are the highest because they are economically superior than other Asian countries. They are much more modernized, technically advanced, not a backward nation like the Southeast Asian countries. In a way, Koreans have a somewhat similar view of seeing Southeast Asian countries as backward. But because Korea is coming out of that, if we intermarry with these people [the Southeast Asians], we would be going back and lowering our status (p. 115).

So when Ken identifies the girl as Vietnamese, it is clear that he is indexing being Vietnamese as a problematic ethnicity. However, because Vietnamese are not highly regarded in either Chinese or Korean culture, it is not clear whether he is constructing them as problematic from his perspective, from Chaz's perspective, or from a joint East Asian perspective. In his earlier identification of the girl as Chinese, for example, it was evident that he was taking Chaz's perspective on the most highly valued ethnicity. In any case, his candidate identification of the girl as Vietnamese invokes this stratified cultural hierarchy, indexing potential ethnic identities for him and for Chaz.

The girl has now therefore been characterized in notably opposed ways, first as extraordinarily positive, and then as highly negative. This tension between Chaz's evident admiration for the girl and the inherent contradiction of her status comes to the fore in the next utterance, when Chaz code-switches into Korean.

## CODE-SWITCHING AND THE HETEROGLOSSIA OF THE CODE

In the next segment, Chaz vehemently denies the girl's positioning as Vietnamese, code-switching into Korean. First, he embodies shock by recoiling and frowning sharply at Ken's suggestion that he would have ever thought so positively about a Vietnamese girl. The term that he uses in Korean is a slur term for Vietnamese, *dangkong*, which is highly localized to a particular subset of the second-generation Korean American community in LA.

- 50 Ken: [what is she Vietnamese?  
 51 Chaz: ((head recoil, frown, eyes flash, then smile)) (.6)  
 52 Chaz: *dangkong anya* ! ((smile voice))  
 53 ((trans: She's not a peanut!))  
 54 Ken: *hh(h)Q(h)Q:(h)Q:(h)* ((recoil back, smiling))  
 55 (.4)

### Intersubjectivity and the indexical meaning of *Dangkong*

*Dangkong*, which literally means peanut, is a highly affect-marked term for Vietnamese used by some second-generation Korean Americans who live in LA. Korean Americans told me that it can also be used to disparage someone who is short and stocky, or to describe the thick, unattractive, muscular legs of a woman. The Koreans from Korea with whom I spoke only recognized the use of it as meaning peanut or short; its use as a referent for Vietnamese seems to be strongly localized to LA. Specifically, the term is used exclusively by second-generation Korean Americans who socialize in predominantly Korean American settings, such as Garden Grove and Koreatown. According to this survey, Korean Americans in their twenties who went away from LA for high school, or who do not socialize in predominantly Korean American settings were unaware of its use to refer to Vietnamese. Several informants offered the folk theory that sound symbolism had played a role in its origin, and that the /ng/ sound iconically represented the nasalized sounds of the Vietnamese language.

This term was universally identified as derogatory, with an affective force equivalent to such English terms as “kike” and “nigger.” Interestingly, Ken and Chaz have very different linguistic ideologies about the word *dangkong*. When I interviewed Chaz, he told me that he thought the term originated in Korea and specifically stated that it was a term used by “real first generation guys,” known to most 1.5 generation Korean Americans, but in fact not part of the lexicon of many second-generation types. For him, then, using this term with Ken would demonstrate that he was taking Ken’s perspective and indexing Ken’s social framework from Korea.

While Ken is certainly acquainted with the use of *dangkong* as a referent for Vietnamese and well aware of its affective force in this context, he learned the term here in LA. For him, it actually functions as an index of Chaz’ participation in a second-generation Korean American community, as distinct from his own 1.5 generation community. In his view, the cultural divide between the 1.5 generation, who were mostly socialized in Korea, and the second generation, who were socialized in America, is quite large. Ken told me that he actually finds it easier to interact with “pure Anglo-Saxon Americans” than with second-generation Korean Americans, because he expects Korean Americans to share congruent cultural

expectations, but second generation types often fail to use the proper terms of respect with him or to speak to him in a way befitting his status as an elder. In Ken's linguistic ideology, then, Chaz's use of the term *dangkong* actually reifies the linguistic and cultural divisions between himself and Chaz.

Here the heteroglossia of speakers' individual ideologies about words directly impacts the achievement of intersubjectivity in conversation. As Bakhtin (1981) observed,

Language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker's intentions; it is populated—overpopulated—with the intentions of others. Expropriating it, forcing it to submit to one's own intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process (p. 294).

While Chaz seems to be attempting to imprint his own intentions upon the word, as an affiliating term meant to index commonality with Ken, Ken doesn't seem to hear this turn as affiliative; upon hearing *dangkong anya*, or "she's not a peanut!," he recoils sharply, embodying the loaded negative affect of the term, while exclaiming "hh(h)Q(h)Q:(h)Q:(h).".

This lack of intersubjectivity concerning the word's indexical meaning becomes a key factor in constructing stances of alignment in the subsequent turns.

### Code-switching and the indexing of multiple ethnic identities

When Chaz says "*Dangkong anya!* (She's not a peanut!)," he again invokes a multiplicity of changing ethnic identities for all of the figures summarized in the following table:

**Table 4: Chaz: *Dangkong anya!* (She's not a peanut!)**

language of utterance	Korean
construction of girl	not Vietnamese
construction of Ken	inside member of the Korean American speech community
construction of Chaz	inside member of the Korean American speech community
construction of Vietnamese	devalued ethnicity from a Korean American perspective
construction of Koreans	dislike Vietnamese

The use of a particularly vulgar form of Korean in this turn is heteroglossic because the turn can be seen as both affiliative and disaffiliative. From one perspective, Chaz is clearly disagreeing with Ken. He is insulted that Ken would presume that he would ever have been so enthusiastic about a Vietnamese girl. Chaz reads Ken's candidate identification of the girl as an index for his own status and performs his umbrage that Ken would consider him as lowly as a Vietnamese person—first through his body behavior, marked as head recoil, frown, and flashing eyes on line 51, and also through the forceful affect he projects when he says "*dangkong anya!*" Vietnamese women are therefore constructed here not only as not worthy of dating, but as not even capable of being attractive.

While the immediate action this utterance may be performing is disagreeing forcefully with Ken's identification, from another perspective, Chaz is indexing solidarity with Ken. He does this first of all by using a language which only he and Ken, of the three conversationalists, can understand, therefore selecting Ken as sole addressee. Because the term *dangkong* as a referent for Vietnamese is highly localized to the Korean American community of Los Angeles and comes from a particularly vulgar and in-group register, the use of this marked form by Chaz indexes joint insider membership for himself and for Ken in a speech community where conventions regarding the social meaning of the word, and the denigration it encodes, are shared. This word thereby both presupposes and creates affiliation through a mutual stance towards Vietnamese.

In effect, Chaz recontextualizes Ken's statement in line 50, "what is she Vietnamese," as a projection of Ken's own attitudes. The use of the term *dangkong*, a slur term which refers to Vietnamese as small brown food items, explicitly encodes denigration, thereby lexicalizing the stance Chaz thought Ken was indexing in line 50. As noted earlier, it was not clear whether Ken was producing this stance as his own or as his understanding of Chaz's cultural values. When Chaz says *dangkong anya* in Korean, however, he marks hatred of Vietnamese as a particularly Korean stance, thereby repositioning Ken's earlier statement as a voicing of his own cultural values. Chaz thus intensifies the alignment he thought Ken was indexing, not just as a joint East Asian stance towards Vietnamese, but as a Korean American one.

Chaz's use of Korean here is therefore double-edged. On the one hand, he is displaying an orientation towards Ken by using his language, and he is indexing solidarity with him through the mutual denigration of Vietnamese. On the other, he is refracting a particularly unsavory part of Korean culture, and one which is usually not readily disclosed to outsiders. The switch to Korean not only circumscribes Rob, the African-American, out of the conversation, it also marks this view of Vietnamese as insider knowledge, a shared cultural attitude which is perhaps not suitable for outsiders' ears. Furthermore, it contextualizes the Korean language itself as the language of insults, ethnic tensions, and later on in the segment, vulgarity (for summary see table).

Table 5: Affiliative and Disaffiliative Implications of One Korean Code-Switch

affiliative implications of this code-switch to Korean	disaffiliative implications of this code-switch to Korean
selects Ken as sole addressee	performs umbrage at Ken's presupposition that Chaz would ever have been so enthusiastic about a Vietnamese girl
displays Chaz's orientation towards Ken and his cultural values by using his language	situates dislike of Vietnamese as a particularly Korean value
indexes affiliation based on joint denigration of Vietnamese	constructs the Korean language as the language of insults, vulgarity, and ethnic tension
contextualizes "what is Vietnamese" as a projection of Ken's own attitudes towards Vietnamese	

### Identification of the girl's ethnicity and its troublesome implications

At last, in line 56, after two incorrect guesses, Ken asks Chaz to identify the girl's ethnicity directly. Chaz has in fact evaded several earlier slots to identify the girl's ethnicity, since the denial of an incorrect candidate identification is usually followed by providing of the correct identification.<sup>2</sup> Note too that Ken does not follow Chaz' code-switch but persists in using English, a disaffiliative move :

- 56 Ken: **what is she [then.**  
57 *[((Chaz looks off to right side))*  
58 Chaz: **hanguk yucha=**  
59 *((trans: Korean girl))*  
60 Ken: **=Korean?**  
61 Chaz: **yeah** *((Chaz vertical headshake))*  
62 Ken: **really.** *((withdraws gaze from Chaz, looks off to left side, grimaces,*  
63 *looks down and reaches for sandwich))*  
64 *((2.0) ((Chaz bites lip, looks left))*

Chaz's response, *hanguk yucha* (Korean girl) is multivocalic in a number of respects, indexing identities for the girl, himself, and Ken, while again accomplishing contradictory actions of affiliation and disaffiliation:



Table 6: Chaz: *Hanguk yucha* (Korean girl)

language of utterance	Korean
construction of girl	Korean
construction of Ken	member of the Korean American speech community
construction of Chaz	member of the Korean American speech community
construction of Koreans	problematic ethnicity

While Chaz is still using Ken’s language, a move which could index solidarity with him by again referencing common membership in a linguistic community, this statement firmly contextualizes Ken himself in a negative light. Remember that the girl’s ethnicity was “the only thing,” the “only one point of question” which prevented Chaz from dating her. If her ethnicity is a trouble source, and she is then identified as Korean, clearly, being Korean, like Ken, is a problem for Chaz. Moreover, the projection of this Korean girl is rejected within the projection of a highly negatively constituted Vietnamese girl. And by producing both identifications in Korean, Chaz underscores the links between them.

The central contradiction in Chaz’ ideology has at last become apparent. Chaz’s interactional construction of Koreans as a highly troublesome ethnicity is certainly at odds with his attempts to index his membership in the Korean American community and his affiliation with Ken through a common language. Moreover, the term that he uses, *hanguk yucha* (Korean girl), is neutral and not marked with any sort of softening or affective markers. The muted affect he projects while delivering this utterance and his withdrawal of gaze upon the completion of Ken’s question may reflect his premonitions of its troublesome implications.

We can see that Ken is oriented to the ramifications of the correspondence which has just equated having an undesirable ethnicity with being Korean. Upon hearing that she is Korean, he initiates repair in line 60 and furthermore, continues not to align with Chaz’s language choice by speaking in English. When the girl’s Koreanness is confirmed, Ken withdraws his gaze and performs a large grimace to the side. When Chaz sees Ken’s reaction, he too bites his lip and withdraws his gaze and the tension between them during the 2.0 second silence becomes palpable:

Figure 2: Ken's Reaction



Ken: Korean?  
Chaz: Yeah  
Ken: Really. ((grimace))  
(2.0)  
((Chaz bites lip, looks left))

Table 7: Summary of Implications

Ken	Chaz	Implications
	There's this one girl that's so f:LY:.....! Damn, I am down! she's she's she's all that	girl=extremely positive
What she's Chinese	that's the only one point of question....that's the only thing that's the only thing	girl=not Chinese her ethnicity is a trouble source
What is she Vietnamese?		Vietnamese=problematic ethnicity from either/both Chinese and Korean perspectives
	<i>dangkong anya!</i> (trans: she's not a peanut)	Vietnamese=problematic ethnicity from Korean perspective only Koreans (and Chaz and Ken) strongly disapprove of Vietnamese as romantic partners
What is she then	<i>hanguk yucha</i> (trans: Korean girl)	Chaz is simultaneously indexing his membership in the Korean American community and his affiliation with Ken through language choice, while constituting Korean women as not appropriate for dating

### Double-voicing of another's words

The indexical struggle concerning the word *dangkong* and its ownership becomes explicit in the next turn. When Ken says "O(h)o(h)o(h) you don't like *dangkong* then" in line 65, this has multiple implications.

65 Ken: O(h)o(h)o(h) you don't like *dangkong* then  
66 ((looking down at table))

Given the way in which Ken's own ethnicity has now been marked as troublesome, his reprisal of the construction of Vietnamese could be an attempt to escape from further discussion of the troublesome Korean girl by focusing all of the accrued negative affect onto its proper object, Vietnamese. His turn-initial laughter could seek to rekey the stance towards Vietnamese as a lighthearted joke. And the reprisal of Chaz's term, *dangkong*, is a further index of affiliation with Chaz, and also potentially, a sign of alignment with him through the joint denigration of Vietnamese.

However, the word *dangkong* is the only Korean word in an utterance which is otherwise in English. Not only does Ken's refuse to accommodate Chaz's code-switch to Korean, he also stares at the table throughout the turn, avoiding Chaz's smiling gaze. This maintaining of English does not validate Chaz's attempts to index Korean-American identity but rather, reconstitutes him as American. Moreover, his statement animates Chaz as a Vietnamese hater, situating this attitude as a *personal* stance of his, not as a shared cultural norm.

As Bakhtin ([1929] 1984) would put it, this is an example of "vari-directional double-voicing," where "the author ....speaks in someone else's discourse, but...introduces into that discourse a semantic intention directly opposed to the original one" (p. 193). In double-voicing speakers do this by

inserting a new semantic intention into a discourse which already has, and which retains, an intention of its own. Such a discourse, in keeping with its task, must be perceived as belonging to someone else. In one discourse, two semantic intentions appear, two voices (p. 189).

While Ken does recycle Chaz's term *dangkong*, he signals his unease with the term by attributing ownership of it and the intentionality of its negative affect to Chaz, thereby using the word while not necessarily aligning with its stance. And as the rest of the sequence plays out, Chaz continues to seek alignment with the derogatory stance of *dangkong*, while Ken goes to ever increasing measures to distance himself from the term.

### CONCLUSION

In this paper, I hope to have shown how heteroglossia directly impacts the construction of ethnic identities. As the participants marshal their heteroglossic resources, their rapid shifting between registers and languages indexes a multi-

plicity of ethnic identities for themselves and for each other. Yet because language always "lies on the borderline between oneself and the other" (Bakhtin, [1935] 1981, p. 293), speakers' individual ideologies about a word enter into play, and the struggle over intersubjectivity becomes apparent. Thus functional analyses of code-switching which seek to assign a unitary motivation to a particular instance of code-switching ignore the locally situated ways in which one can use a term or a language while simultaneously distancing oneself from the term or from the speakers of that language. As any individual act of language can both attribute prior intentions to another while presupposing and creating shared stance, any instance of code-switching and concomitant invocations of alignment can be resisted and contested by recipients. At each turn, the use of Korean in this short segment is embedded within the particularities of the interaction; using an addressee's language can actually **disaffiliate**, as when Chaz finally identifies the girl **as** Korean **in** Korean within the projection of the negatively identified *dangkong*. The multiple and often contradictory stances and identities invoked by each turn of this conversation underscore the heteroglossic nature of language.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Editor's note: An explanation of the transcription conventions used here can be found in the appendix to Roth & Olsher (this volume).

<sup>2</sup> Emanuel Schegloff, Personal Communication.

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***Speakers, Listeners and Communication: Explorations in Discourse Analysis*** by Gillian Brown. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. 251 pp.

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Students of language use have long acknowledged that communication is a collaborative process between speakers and listeners. Yet, many studies of discourse de-emphasize the role of the listener in this process in favor of a focus on the speaker, upon whom the burden of responsibility for the success or failure of the exchange is seen to rest. Gillian Brown's *Speakers, Listeners and Communication. Explorations in Discourse Analysis* is a welcome attempt to correct this imbalance and to restore to listeners their rightful place in the communicative process.

With its focus on language *use*, the book is written primarily for those with an interest in a pragmatic approach to discourse analysis. Its core consists of an analysis of transcripts of conversations in which participants exchanged information in order to perform specific tasks. The first of these tasks, the Map Task, required speakers to describe a route on a map to listeners, who then drew the route on their own maps. In the second task, the Stolen Letter Task, pairs or groups of subjects separately viewed different scenes from a video story and then came together to reconstruct the sequence of events. The participants in the study were drawn from schools and universities in Edinburgh (Scotland) and Essex (England) and represented a variety of ages, socio-economic backgrounds, and levels of academic ability.

In the opening chapters, Brown discusses several issues in the field of discourse analysis that impact her current study, in particular the question of "correct interpretation" vs. "adequate interpretation" and choice of methodology. She argues that her task-based methodology allows the researcher to more easily determine whether listeners have "adequately" interpreted an utterance by looking at how well they were able to perform the required task, and avoids what she sees as an inherent danger in the ethnographic approach, in which an interpretation of an utterance may be distorted by the analyst's own biases.

The remainder of the book consists of an analysis of the data, with a particular focus on reference. For the Map Task, Brown examines situations in which problems ensue because of lack of agreement between speaker and listener about the specific referent for a given expression or when the referent named by the speaker is not included on the listener's map. Similar problems arise in the Stolen Letter Task, as successful completion of the task requires participants to come to some

agreement about how to refer to the three nameless young women who are the characters in the video drama. Brown notes that in spite of these problems and the often vague and unspecified language used by the speakers, in most cases the listeners were able to successfully interpret the utterances. The primary listener strategy that Brown observed was the construction of what she terms a "search field" which enables listeners to select from the information provided by the speaker only that which is relevant to the listener's task. In the Map Task, this search field limits the listeners to a specific area of the map, beyond which they do not look for the referent. In the Stolen Letter Task, the search field restricts anaphoric reference to the closest possible referent; for example, listeners always interpret 'she' as referring to the woman most recently mentioned and not to any of the other women in the story. Brown concludes with a summary of how the listener, through questions and indications of understanding, works with the speaker to establish mutually shared knowledge and thus plays an important role in determining the success or failure of any communication.

The stated aim of this book is to describe listeners' responses in conversations as a means of furthering our understanding of the process of communication. To a great extent, this aim is met. The analysis of the data is clear, detailed, and liberally illustrated with selections from the transcripts. Brown's careful and thoughtful discussion of the features that she notices in the interactions contribute much to attempts to unravel the invisible process by which a utterance is interpreted by a listener. Her steadfast focus on how the listener actually responded to an utterance rather than conjectures on what the listener "might have thought" is much appreciated. An objection might be made, however, to the artificiality of the situations in which the data were collected and thus the subsequent lack of relevance of her analysis to more "natural" language situations. Even Brown herself acknowledges that her "task-based" format has its limitations and perhaps may better be seen as a complement, rather than an alternative, to sociological and ethnographic approaches.

Overall, this book has much to recommend it. Brown writes clearly and with a minimum of jargon and provides sufficient background information on discourse analysis to make the book accessible even to those whose previous knowledge of the field is limited. Her research methodology is well documented and explained and her conclusions are well-supported by her data. The reader, however, may occasionally find it difficult to follow the discussions, particularly in the Stolen Letter Task where, not having seen the video in question, one can easily get lost in the complex transcripts. Similarly, it would have been helpful to have an example of the map used in the Map Task to get a clearer idea of what the participants were talking about. In addition, Brown made numerous puzzling references to "less academically successful" students, who sometimes appeared to be having difficulty communicating. Since Brown does not define what she means by "less academically successful" or make any explicit connection between the students' lack of success at school and lack of success at doing these tasks, one wonders

why she mentions it at all. Finally, it should be emphasized that this book provides description, not interpretation or application, of what Brown observes in her data. Depending on one's point of view, this focus may be seen as a strength or a weakness. While one can understand and appreciate Brown's reluctance to over interpret and over generalize, the reader may be left at the end wondering how this wealth of information fits into the larger picture.

The narrow and specific focus of *Speakers, Listeners and Communication* makes it more suitable for the specialist than the generalist. The language teacher looking for a direct application to the classroom or the sociologist looking for an analysis of interpersonal relationships between speakers and listeners will find little of interest here. Still, for anyone looking for a well-written discussion of the listener's role in the collaborative process that occurs in task-based communication, this book is well worth reading.

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***Second Language Acquisition*** by Rod Ellis. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997. 147 pp.

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*Second Language Acquisition* by Rod Ellis is one of four published books in a series called *Oxford Introductions to Language Study*, edited by H. G. Widdowson. Although each book can serve as a self-contained unit which has its own purpose, the overall goal of the series is to "ease people into an understanding of complex ideas" associated with language (p. vii). According to Widdowson in the Preface, this book is intended to target a wide range of readers, including people who are not interested in studying linguistics technically, but are just interested in learning more about language. In addition, Widdowson suggests that the books in this series would be an appropriate accompanying text to a more technical introductory linguistics text in the classroom.

The books in this series are broken up into four main sections: Survey, Readings, References, and Glossary. The aim of the Survey section is to provide a brief overview of the area of linguistics that is being discussed within each book. Widdowson describes this section as "simple...not simplistic" (p. viii). In addition to presenting basic information about a particular area, this section aims to provoke questions that the readers wish to explore themselves. The Readings section is geared towards helping the reader take the information presented in the Survey section one step further. This is accomplished by presenting the reader with references to other topical literature, relating them to a specific section in the text, and then posing questions for the reader. The References section lists books and articles that are relevant to the ideas discussed throughout the Survey. Lastly, the Glossary lists the specialized terms that are discussed and referred to throughout the Survey section.

In *Second Language Acquisition*, the Survey section is broken up into ten chapters, each focusing on a specific topic within the field of second language acquisition research. Chapter One, *Introduction: Describing and explaining L2 acquisition*, starts by trying to define L2 acquisition and list the goals of and issues within this field of study. Throughout this section, as well as throughout the book, there are numerous examples illustrating main points. For example, "Finally, learners possess communication strategies that can help them make effective use of their L2 knowledge. For example, even if they have not learned the word 'art gallery' they may be able to communicate the idea of it by inventing their own term (for example, 'picture place')" (p. 5). Such examples help clarify the main points being discussed by Ellis.



In Chapter Two, *The nature of learner language*, errors, developmental patterns, and variability in learner language are discussed. Sentences from language learners exemplify different points being presented throughout this chapter. Also, in this chapter and throughout the Survey section, bold-face specialized vocabulary words are explained within the text, as well as in the Glossary. For example, "Other errors, however, reflect learners' attempts to make use of their L1 knowledge. These are known as **transfer errors**" (p. 19).

In Chapter Three, *Interlanguage*, Ellis briefly describes the behaviorist learning theory and the mentalist theory of language learning before beginning a discussion on interlanguage. This discussion of interlanguage presents six premises about L2 acquisition that are contained within the concept of interlanguage. He concludes this chapter with a diagram illustrating a computational model of L2 acquisition.

Chapters Four through Seven expand upon the topic of interlanguage by discussing multiple aspects of interlanguage: The social, discourse, psycholinguistic, and linguistic aspects of interlanguage are each addressed in a separate chapter. These sections, following the example and definition format described for Chapters One and Two, additionally present theories, models, and hypotheses that have emerged in L2 acquisition research, dealing in particular with their effects on the interlanguage of a language learner. In particular, some of the topics presented throughout these chapters are: the acculturation model of L2 acquisition, role of input and output in L2 acquisition, L1 transfer, universal grammar, and the critical period hypothesis. Overall, these chapters attempt to expose the reader to a variety of perspectives of L2 acquisition.

Chapter Eight, *Individual differences in L2 acquisition*, ventures away from universal perspectives on L2 acquisition discussed in previous chapters. Here, Ellis deals primarily with language aptitude and motivation. When discussing language aptitude, he primarily defines what it means to have language aptitude. In the case of motivation, he breaks his discussion into four types of motivation: instrumental, integrative, resultative, and intrinsic, and defines each of these types.

In Chapter Nine, *Instruction and L2 acquisition*, Ellis presents some past research that has been done to determine whether or not form-focused instruction works and what type of form-focused instruction works best. Chapter Ten, *Conclusion: Multiple perspectives in SLA*, emphasizes that, due to the complex nature of language acquisition, it is impossible to come up with one theory that adequately addresses all that is contained within SLA research. Therefore, there is still a need for multiple perspectives in SLA.

The second section is the Readings section. This section parallels the chapters discussed in the Survey section. For each chapter, this section lists different texts that expand upon the important ideas addressed within the Survey section. In each section, article or book references are given. Then, each article or book is briefly annotated. For example, in regards to an article by Lydia White, the annotation is, "In this text White considers how researchers can set about investigating



whether Universal Grammar (UG) is still available in L2 acquisition" (p. 112). Then Ellis discusses the main ideas or controversies presented in the annotated articles, also trying to relate them to the material presented in the Survey section. Lastly, he presents study questions geared at helping the learner explore these topics further.

Section 3, References, lists 62 sources, again organized to parallel the chapters in the Survey section. These references, both books and articles, are briefly annotated. These annotations are similar to the one described above in reference to White's article. Additionally, each reference is classified as an introductory, more advanced, or specialized text. According to the Preface, written by Widdowson, this section is supposed to contain accompanying comment to "indicate how these deal in more detail with the issues discussed in the different chapters of the survey" (p. IX). However, this particular volume does not contain such comments, which is unfortunate for the novice reader wishing to pursue these topics individually.

The last section, the Glossary, provides a basic list of the specialized words used throughout the Survey section. Although most of these terms were explicitly defined within the Survey section, they are again listed here for quick reference. At the end of each of the definitions, page references to the Survey section are given. A sample glossary entry is as follows, "**L1 Transfer** The process by which the learner's L1 influences the acquisition and use of an L2. [51]" (p. 140).

Overall, the Survey section provides an adequate overview of some basic concepts of SLA. I think that this section is especially appropriate for a novice interested in a basic introduction to SLA. Ellis gives his reader access to complex theories and hypotheses by providing numerous examples, definitions, and diagrams, when appropriate. Also, Ellis breaks this complex topic up into ten chapters, allowing the readers to focus on smaller sections within this large, intricate topic.

Because the Readings section presents comments about each topic and helps the readers explore the topics further, I think this would be especially appropriate to use in an introductory level undergraduate class on SLA. Not only does this section lead the readers to more complex references within SLA research, but it also helps them process these new references by posing questions at the end of each section.

In my opinion, the best thing about the References section is that it addresses the complexity of each article or book. This could be very helpful when the readers are trying to choose which type of reference they would like to read. Also, having these references parallel the chapters in the Survey section can help readers choose books that are applicable to the topics that interest them. Lastly, the Glossary is a useful tool for students to refer to while in the process of mastering the specialized words presented in the text.

In *Second Language Acquisition*, Ellis succeeds in giving the reader a basic overview of some issues in SLA research. He provides enough examples and

definitions to guide the reader through a self-study of this field. Then he presents complicated discussions and questions geared towards helping the readers explore the topics contained within this book by themselves. Although on the surface, this book may seem like an over-simplification of the complex field of SLA research, this book proves to be a powerful tool in opening the door, even to the novice, into this field and therefore accomplishes Widdowson's goal of "eas[ing] people into an understanding of complex ideas" of language (p. vii).



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***Pragmatic Development*** by Anato Ninio and Catherine E. Snow.  
Boulder, CO: Westview, 1996, 222 pp.

Reviewed by Masahiko Minami  
*University of Massachusetts, Lowell*

Many language rules that children learn from early childhood are inseparable from social conventions. Even in the first year of life, a baby learns the rules of turn-taking through interactions with his or her mother: The mother says something, then the baby vocalizes, then the mother speaks again, and again the baby vocalizes. Over the years the child gradually learns a variety of conversational skills, such as opening and shifting topics, holding the floor, distributing turns of talk. As its title suggests, Anato Ninio and Catherine Snow's new book focuses on such pragmatic development.

Four scenarios—pragmatic failures and successes in everyday situations—open Chapter 1, in which Ninio and Snow outline the goals and topics of the book and define the domain of pragmatic development. The authors emphasize the importance of studying how children develop communicative abilities which enable them to cope with particular situations and perform social-communicative acts effectively. However, as the distinction between psychology and linguistics is not always clear, the boundaries between developmental pragmatics and other domains, such as various types of cognitive and social skills, are incapable of precise definition. In fact, as children's capability increases, enabling them to generate and integrate a variety of linguistic components—syntactic, semantic, pragmatic, and lexical—these components are further connected with children's growing social-cognitive competence. The authors' conceptualization of pragmatic development, then, is predicated upon their empiricist, interactionist paradigm in which individuals and society construct one another through social interaction, and children are not passive beneficiaries of their environments but active agents in their own socialization throughout life.

Ninio and Snow's empiricist view presents a nice contrast to the nativists' conception that human beings are genetically endowed with the capacity to create sentences. Nativists would argue, for example, that input is of negligible importance for first language acquisition, pointing out that children in Japan learn to speak Japanese, whereas children in the United States learn to speak English even though the environmental input is minimal—and often agrammatical. Ninio and Snow, on the other hand, bring up a characteristic feature of Japanese conversational discourse called back-channels, and contend that nativists' argument is too simplistic and that instead, language is shaped by culture-specific experiences and beliefs. According to the authors, the Japanese listener's frequent use of back-

channels is supportive behavior, reflecting Japanese belief that the receiver is responsible for making sense out of the sender's message. In North America, in contrast, the sender is believed to be responsible for producing a coherent, clear, and intelligible message.

The implication of the above contrast, according to Ninio and Snow, is that through the process of socialization, parents transmit to their young children not only language-specific representational forms and rules but also culturally preferred interaction styles. In framing the volume, the authors draw on a central tenet of Cultural Psychology, namely the "constructivist" conception of meaning, which stipulates that social interactions are culturally constrained. To draw an example from politeness, imagine a situation in which you ask a person living on the same street for a ride home. It goes without saying that you make a request differently, depending on a variety of factors such as age, sex, social hierarchy, personal relationships, and the like. The expression of communicative intents, however, might also differ cross-culturally. In some cultures using indirect requests might be a societal norm, such as "I was wondering if you would be able to give me a ride on your way home," whereas in other cultures such indirect communicative strategies are simply dismissed. This volume examines how children acquire such culturally distinct communicative strategies in the process of language development.

The chapters of this volume are logically divided and well organized. Preparing readers for the discussion of later chapters, Chapter 2 provides a valuable and richly illustrated description of the Ninio and Wheeler taxonomy and coding scheme, along with other coding systems derived from it. An abundance of speech act categories suggests the complexity of communicative acts that the child is expected to acquire and control in interpersonal communication in years to come. The main body of the book, Chapters 3-6, presents a detailed discussion of pragmatic development, generally in chronological order. Chapter 3 concerns the prelinguistic period. Chapter 4 addresses the first words children use (although the authors caution that, due to the general limitation of children's speech, the social functions are more salient than pragmatic functions at least initially). Chapter 5 maps the later development of the speech act system. Chapter 6 compares children's use of speech in face-to-face interaction with their mothers, drawing on two longitudinal observational studies—one conducted by Ninio and the other conducted by Snow and her colleagues. The chapter ends with a discussion of young children's developing indirect communicative strategies, in which, according to the authors, two-year-olds can correctly interpret indirect requests—speech acts which, considering young children's relative social inexperience, indicate surprising pragmatic sophistication.

Ninio and Snow start the main body of their discussion (i.e., Chapter 3) by addressing long-standing controversies in developmental psychology, such as whether early functioning exerts an effect on later functioning. The authors from the start target their criticism on Piaget's view that infants learn about everything from scratch, constructing the notion of object permanence, for example, gradu-



ally during the sensorimotor period of cognitive development (until about two years of age). This critique of object permanence is reasonable given recent research (e.g., Wynn, 1992) that refutes Piaget's belief that infants are not born with an understanding of how objects exist in space and time. Although the authors cautiously present a broad array of theories, their criticism of Piaget, and in particular his contention that changes from stage to stage are abrupt and qualitative, further leads to their partial support of an alternative theory, that children's early language is continuous with their preverbal communicative systems.

One of the primary goals of this volume is to stress that early mother-child interactions are a primary contributor to children's acquisition of meaning in socioculturally appropriate ways. As empiricists, Ninio and Snow insist that the importance of imitation should not be underestimated; they also highlight the role of "scaffolding," the temporary support that the mother gives the child to perform a task (Bruner, 1977). Scaffolding encompasses a variety of parental supports for language development in the young child. Sometime in their first year of life, infants make sounds, trying to match what they hear from their environment. Mothers also help children handle and construct schemata—structures in semantic memory that specify the general arrangement of a body of information. To interpret the meaning of what the mother says, one-year-olds initially make use of the surrounding context such as particular settings. As they grow, however, schemata gradually become established and applicable to a wider range of contexts. This environmental shaping is largely attributable to mothers' scaffolding. More than that, the joint construction of stories by preschool children and mothers in later years, for example, is an important context in which mothers provide guidance and support to children's preparation for literacy.

The final two chapters address discourse development: conversational skills in Chapter 7 and connected (or extended) discourse such as narratives, explanations, and word definitions in Chapter 8. These two chapters complete the authors' goal to untangle the relationships among the emergence of conversational skills, extended discourse, and speech acts (which they detail in the earlier chapters of the book). In narrative contexts, for example, like other domains, children's speech is guided and scaffolded by mothers. As Eisenberg (1985) suggested some time ago, children begin to talk about past events at about two years of age, at first with much assistance from mothers. Moreover, preschool children tell narratives, following general schemata (or general event knowledge) that they have acquired early on through interactions with their mothers. The authors further report research findings that stylistic differences between parents affect children's later narrative style; for example, those mothers who ask for background information early in development have children who provide elaborated accounts about settings later in development. Ninio and Snow thus repeatedly emphasize that parental talk provides a verbal framework for children's representations.

For those involved in language development, *Pragmatic Development* is long overdue. After reading this book, readers will likely be struck by the substantial amount of theoretical discussion. Another strength is the depth of research pre-



sented and discussed in the book. Unfortunately, its strengths are, in a way, also its weaknesses. Excessive focus on theories and too much information on research findings in some chapters might make it difficult to follow for some readers. Despite this potential drawback, the book is an important contribution to our understanding of pragmatic development. As adults, most pragmatic rules are so culturally ingrained that we are not even aware we are following them. Thus, it is refreshing to see a clear and sophisticated explication of language development from a pragmatic point of view. The book is recommended not only as required reading for language development courses, but also as an informative resource book.

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